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ABSTRACT

This document consists of the five issues of the newsletter of the General Educational Development (GED) Testing Service: January/February, March/April, May/June, September/October, and November/December. Each issue contains information of interest to users of the GED examinations. The feature article for the January/February issue is "Next Generation of GED Tests: Blue Prints Leave the Drawing Board" by Katherine S. Woodward. This article is a discussion of plans for the new GED tests that are now ready to enter the research and evaluation stage. Other articles discuss economic gain and equivalency examinations, the use of educational technology in adult education, algebra instruction, writing instruction, and ensuring the currency of the GED. The March/April issue features "Admissions and Scholarships for GED Graduates: Guidelines for Interpreting Scores," an update of a GED fact sheet, as well as articles on the value of GED testing for the community, making accommodations for specific learning disabilities, and finding financial aid for college. The May/June issue features "Honeywell Honors 15 Toronto Employees with GED Graduation Ceremony" by John Allston. Honeywell was one of the first companies in Toronto (Canada) to bring GED tests to its employees. Other articles in this issue discuss the overestimation of college costs by many parents and a training program on learning disabilities for GED examiners. The feature article for the September/October issue is "Higher Minimum Score Standard for GED Diploma Affects Passing Rate." Other articles discuss a GED graduate's story; new Section 10 Appendix G of the 1997 "GED Examiner's Manual"; and 2001-series GED tests, where the practice of permitting each jurisdiction to set its own policy concerning combining of scores across "generations" of the test will end. The feature article of the November/December issue, "GED's Highest Honor Goes to Program Leader," discusses the recipient of the 1998 Cornelius P. Turner award. Other articles in this issue discuss the Internet delivery of GED Preparation 1; a campaign to debunk college expense myths, and misconceptions; and how GED examiners can ensure that the Annual Statistical Report (ASR) is accurate and published on time. (SLD)

ED 425 169

GED Items.
The Newsletter of the GED Testing Service

American Council on Education

1998

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GED Items
more than 24,000 readers
Volume 15 Number 1 AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION January/February 1998

Next Generation of GED Tests: Blue Prints Leave Drawing Board

by Katherine S. Woodward

There are many steps in the development process for the new GED Tests, known as "GED2000." As members of the GED Testing Service staff lead content area experts past the design stage into the model building stage, the GED Testing Service (GEDTS) will share our findings with the public through the GED website, as well as at national, state, and local meetings.

In this issue of GED Items, GEDTS offers a look at plans for the new tests that are now ready to enter the research and evaluation stage.

Test Specifications Committee

In January 1997, the GED Testing Service convened a 29-member Specifications Committee, in Washington, DC, to develop specifications for the new GED 2000 Series Tests.

The Committee (see page 3 for a list of members) was selected after an extensive nomination process and consisted of experts from throughout the United States and Canada representing the four academic disciplines of English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Current Status of New Tests

Currently, the GED Testing Service is researching the Specification Committee's recommendations to determine the structure of the new GED 2000 Series tests. Implementation decisions about content validity, reliability, and feasibility are in process.

The final specifications will be presented for approval to the GED Advisory Committee, the Commission on Adult Learning and Educational Credentials, and the ACE Board.

Policy Parameters for GED 2000 Series Tests

Administration: The new tests will continue to be large-scale, cost-effective, decentralized, and jointly administered by the GED Testing Service and its partners—the departments and ministries of education in the 50 U.S. states, the U.S. territories, and most Canadian provinces and territories.

Purpose: The purpose of the new tests will continue to be to provide adults who have not graduated from high school the opportunity to earn a high school equivalency diploma by taking and passing the tests.

Content: The new tests will continue to reflect the major and lasting outcomes of a four-year high school program of study in the core academic disciplines (English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies), with an increased emphasis on workplace and higher education needs.

GED 2000 Series Tests: Proposed Changes from 1988 Series

The following five major changes for the new GED 2000 Series tests are proposed. No final decisions will be made until the projected changes are researched and evaluated. The GED Testing Service will forward its recommendation for test specifications to the ACE Governing Boards, beginning with the GED Advisory Committee, in early spring 1998.

- **One English language arts Test:**

The current Test 1: Writing Skills and Test 4: Interpreting Literature and the Arts may become one English language arts test but have two parts, Responding to Text and Generating Text. The test bat-

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Skills in Balance: Economic Gain and the Common Good

by Joan Auchter

Economic concerns continue to dominate many of the discussions of the utility of the GED high school equivalency diploma. It often seems as if income advancement is the only valid outcome of taking and passing the tests. The educator and civil rights leader, W.E.B. DuBois, wrote in 1902: "The ideals of education, whether men [sic] are taught to teach or plow, to weave or to write, must not be allowed to sink into sordid utilitarianism. Education must keep broad ideals before it, and never forget that it is dealing with Souls not Dollars."

What do adults identify as their reasons for taking the GED Tests? According to ***Who Took the GED?***, the GED statistical report, 64 percent of them plan further education and training, the largest number planning further study in GED history; 28 percent gave employment as their reason for taking the tests.

The National Institute for Literacy's Equipped for the Future initiative asked adult learners what they thought they needed to know and be able to do to meet Goal 6 of the National Education Goals. Lisa Levinson of the Center for Adult Learning and Literacy found that 1,500 adult learners saw personal achievement of the goal as having four distinct aspects: Access to information so that they could orient themselves to the world; Voice so that others would hear them and they could make a difference; Independent Action so that they could make decisions without having to rely on others; and Bridge to the Future so that they would learn how to learn what they needed to know in our changing world. Levinson reports, "They voiced that they needed to know how to achieve the four purposes so they could be more effective parents, citizens, and workers."

While adults identify substantive citizenship and cultural democracy as organizing principles that can build a democratic society contingent upon the informed participation of all its members, a distinct trend points to fragile support for the educational advancement of nontraditional adult students.

Adult learners themselves perceive the value of education as did DuBois at the beginning of the century; they are asking to learn how to fish.

Several GED Administrators link a decline in the number of test takers in their states during 1997 with the impact of welfare reform legislation. Educational activities (GED or otherwise) cannot be included in the 20 hours per week permitted for work-related training activities. As a result, says one,"the hardest hit portion of the population are middle age females with low literacy skills who now must find any menial job in order to get employed." Are we feeding people when we should be teaching them how to fish?

Our democratic institutions depend upon and are sustained by an educated citizenry. While moving from welfare to the workforce and creating economic advancement are valid outcomes of education, democracy demands much more. Democratic life requires critical inquiry, civic participation, and a commitment to the common good.

Increasingly, we are hearing that adult learners themselves perceive the value of education as did DuBois at the beginning of the century; they are asking to learn how to fish. They are telling us that a heavy reliance on skills training may perpetuate a deeply stratified society—one divided into those who learn the limited skills required for one specific job and those who acquire the skill of learning and thereby find much more available to them than just a single job.

We are at a crossroad where we have an historical opportunity to promote systemic change—change that goes beyond a quick fix of immediate "Dollar" gains; change that provides a bridge to the future by nourishing the "Soul."

Joan E. Auchter is Director of the GED Testing Service.

WINNER
APEX '97
AWARDS FOR PUBLICATION EXCELLENCE

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tery will continue to include a direct writing assessment.

- **Calculator use on the Mathematics Test:**

Examinees will be allowed to use a calculator for most of the test (approximately 80%). Some of the test will not allow calculator use (approximately 20%), so that estimation and calculation skills can still be demonstrated.

The new tests will continue to reflect the major and lasting outcomes of a four year high school program of study in the core academic disciplines.

- **Shifts in content and skills, including more explicit emphasis on cross-disciplinary skills across tests:**

The tests will include some different emphases. For example, the English Language Arts Test will reflect the NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) framework and may require an additional section on informational texts.

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GED 2000 Test Specifications Committee

English language arts: *Rebecca Cossar, Distance Learning Branch, Ontario Ministry of Education and Training; Willie Mae Crews, Birmingham Public Schools, Alabama; Judy Gilbert, Eagle Rock School and Professional Development Center, Colorado; Carol Jago (subcommittee chair), Santa Monica High School, California; Irwin S. Kirsch, Language Learning and Assessment, Educational Testing Service (ETS); Sheila Potter, Michigan Department of Education; George Shea, Belleville High School, Illinois; Deborah Wilchek, Richard Montgomery High School, Maryland.*

Mathematics: *Steve Leinwand (subcommittee chair), Connecticut Department of Education; Myrna Manly, El Camino College, California; Rick Jennings, a math teacher with over 25 years of involvement in mathematics curriculum development; currently on leave to work on a teacher training project; Rick Kitchen, San José State University; Mary Jane Schmitt, Office of Mathematics and Science, Massachusetts Department of Education; Gerald Kulm, American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS); Hugh Sanders, Curriculum Standards Branch, Alberta Education, Edmonton.*

Science: *Bill G. Aldridge, National Science Teachers Association; Vern Barrett, Math, Science, and Technology Unit, Manitoba Education and Training, Winnipeg; Charles B. Blevens, Clark County Adult Education, Arkadelphia, Arkansas; Kathleen M. Brown, Massachusetts Statewide Coordinator for Science and Technology; George D. "Pinky" Nelson (subcommittee chair), American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS); Lois Marie Range, Jefferson Davis Senior High School, Houston, Texas; Robert E. Yager, University of Iowa.*

Social Studies: *Margaret Stimmann Branson, Center for Civic Education, California.; Adrian Davis, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS); Richard Diem (subcommittee chair), University of Texas at San Antonio; James Marran, Social Studies Chair Emeritus, New Trier Township High School, Winnetka, Illinois and resource teacher, Boston University/Chelsea Partnership; Denny Schillings, Homewood-Flossmoor High School, Illinois and chair, State Board of Education Social Studies Standards Committee; Vincent Warner, Policy and Evaluation Division, Prince Edward Island Department of Education, Charlottetown; Kurt Waters, Centreville High School, Fairfax County, Virginia.*

Note: For complete profiles of committee members, please visit our website.

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from TELEVISION AND ADULT LITERACY, a Ford Foundation report

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New Tools Help Adult Ed Reach More People

LiteracyLink℠ is a emergent program that uses technology to improve provision of basic skills education for adults in the home, workplace, and libraries.

A partnership between the National Center on Adult Literacy (NCAL), the Public Broadcasting Corporation's (PBS) Adult Learning Service, Kentucky Educational Television (KET), and the Kentucky Department of Education, LiteracyLink℠ integrates several aspects of instruction and staff development to update and enhance available resources for American communities working to improve and expand their adult ed services.

Funded under a five-year, $15 million grant through the U.S. Department of Education's Star Schools program, LiteracyLink℠ incorporates video, online communications, interactive multimedia, and text to provide "education on demand" to a broader range of people who need to upgrade their learning and workplace skills.

LiteracyLink℠ will deliver content in formats tailored to the wide variation in technical capacity at the learner level as well as at the program level.

Three components provide the foundation for the program. First, LiteracyLink℠ builds upon existing resources. "Many excellent materials already exist," noted a recent issue of the International Literacy Institute's online newsletter, ***Literacy Innovations***, "they just need adapting to current technologies." Second, LiteracyLink℠ will deliver content in formats tailored to the wide variation in technical capacity at the learner level as well as at the program level. Finally, the system capitalizes on existing infrastructure—not just public broadcast stations, but converging technologies such as satellite videoconferencing and data transmission, digital compression, and online networking—to encourage interaction between learners, teachers, and schools.

LiteracyLink℠ includes an assessment component that will help both service providers and learners to quickly develop an accurate picture of the learner's strengths and needs and design a program of study. The instructional component consists of online interactive sessions and assessments that contain tutorials and simulations; these are organized into modules that mirror the content areas covered by the GED Tests.

Another component will aim at supporting instructors by providing staff development resources and training as well as online forums teachers can use to support each other and exchange ideas.

Finally, as the system comes together, 25 local PBS member stations, libraries, schools, colleges, community organizations, and businesses will serve as field laboratories, providing feedback on LiteracyLink's development and implementation.

For more information, visit the LiteracyLink℠ website at http://www.pbs.org/literacy/ or e-mail literacy@pbs.org.

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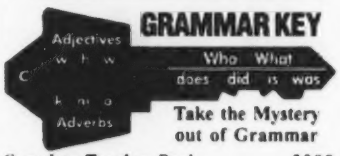

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Educating the Educator—Ensuring GED's Currency

by Jim Barlow

On October 30, 1997, Sharon Kalbfleisch, Dean of Academic Assessment and special projects for Conestoga College and I co-hosted a seminar for college and university admissions officials for southwestern Ontario. Our purpose was to orient and update registrars on the "nuts and bolts" of the GED Tests that have been just recently introduced to the Province of Ontario.

Keynote speakers at the seminar included Ghislaine Lefebvre, GED supervisor with Ontario's Ministry of Education and Training, and Peter Kilburn, former chair of the GED Advisory Committee and the Council of Canadian GED Administrators.

Ghislaine Lefebvre informed the group that more than 700 people in Ontario have already earned their GED certificates and that the number of test sites has doubled since the GED was officially implemented in June, 1996.

Peter Kilburn presented information on GED testing activities across Canada. He also described for the group a study in the province of New Brunswick which tracked people with GED certificates who went on to community college. The results showed that the GED graduates did just as well in college courses as those who were traditional high school graduates. In addition, GED graduates were more likely to stick to the program of study they chose.

Registrars and Admissions Officers from colleges in southwestern Ontario attended a GED orientation seminar hosted by Jim Barlow, of the Waterloo County Board of Education, and Sharon Kalbfleisch, of Conestoga College.

Earning the certificate "does wonders for things like self-esteem and self-confidence," Kilburn told the admissions officials. "When a person with a GED certificate comes knocking at your door, you're dealing with a mature applicant, a person who is motivated. If there's any way you can let them in, you're going to get one really good candidate."

After the seminar at Conestoga College, several college and university administrators said the information would help them decide how to deal with applicants who hold GED certificates.

Others at the seminar, who deal with adults trying to get a better education, were thrilled that the GED Tests were now available in Ontario. "Some of the people I see would never have gone to an adult high school," said Mary Adamson, who is involved in the GED Preparation Program for the Waterloo Region District School Board. "I really believe in providing adults with viable options."

In addition to his work as Vice-Principal of Adult Education for the Waterloo Region District School Board, James E. Barlow is the 1997 recipient of the International Adult Basic Education Administrator Award and chairs the Ontario Prior Learning Assessment Network. Jim has authored two books for adult educators, ***The Journey*** *and* ***Assessment and Placement*** *of Adult Learners.*

Of Note...

In its first year as a full-fledged GED program, Ontario demonstrated an 81.3% pass rate, according to *Who Took the GED?*, the GED Testing Service's 1996 statistical report.

Study Finds More Students Taking Algebra, Geometry, in High School

by Carlos Rodriguez

In 1990, Pelavin Associates published a report, *Changing the Odds*, demonstrating that successfully completing Algebra 1 and Geometry in high school strongly correlates with college enrollment and graduation. The findings from this research became the foundation on which the College Board launched a major national reform initiative, Equity 2000.

The evaluation revealed ...more African American, Hispanic, Asian, as well as white students enrolling in and passing Algebra 1 in 9th grade and Geometry in 10th grade than were even enrolled in these courses five years earlier.

The primary goal of Equity 2000 is to close the gap in graduation rates between minority and mainstream students by requiring that all 9th and 10th grade students take Algebra and Geometry. The target population consists of poor, disadvantaged, and minority students in six large majority-minority urban school districts across the United States.

During the demonstration phase of Equity 2000 (from 1991 to 1996), the American Institutes for Research (AIR) evaluated the impact of the initiative at the participating sites.

The evaluation revealed that Equity 2000 had achieved considerable success, with more African American, Hispanic, Asian, as well as white students enrolling in and passing Algebra 1 in 9th grade and Geometry in 10th grade than were even enrolled in these courses five years earlier.

The College Board's initiative therefore demonstrated that minority, disadvantaged, and poor students can rise to high levels of academic performance in Algebra and Geometry when the barriers to educational opportunity are removed.

To determine if students at the demonstration sites are beginning to access college at higher rates, the American Institutes for Research and the College Board are currently designing a longitudinal study of students from a sample of the participating school districts.

Carlos Rodríguez, Ph.D., is a Senior Research Analyst at the Pelavin Research Center, a subsidiary of the American Institutes for Research.

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The math test will involve increased emphasis on data analysis, statistics, and probability.

Overall, cross-disciplinary skills such as information-processing, problem-solving, and communication may be more explicitly identified in test specifications across the tests in the battery.

- **Possibility of a cross-disciplinary test:**
  A separate test that applies to all disciplines may be included in the test battery. Such a test would allow examinees to use informational processing skills to interpret a broad range of texts across the core academic disciplines. GEDTS is in the research phase for this test.

- **Alternate formats:**
  The tests will include machine scorable but non-multiple choice questions (such as gridding answers in mathematics).

The GED Testing Service will post updates on its website as new information becomes available. Using your web browser, look under "What's New" at the following URL: http://www.acenet.edu/Programs/CALEC/GED/home.html.

Katherine S. Woodward, Ph.D. is the Test Specialist for Interpreting Literature and the Arts at the GED Testing Service. She also oversees the development of Special Editions.

Research Related...

A study by Joan Auchter and Gary Skaggs found that graduating high school seniors who reported having taken Algebra I and Geometry achieved higher GED standard scores than seniors who did not. "The Performance of 1993Graduating High School Seniors: How Do U.S. High Schools Measure Up?"presented this and other findings at the annual meeting of the National Council on Measurement in Education in New Orleans, April, 1994. For a copy of the paper, please write to Jocelyn Jolley at the GED Testing Service.

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Remodeling the Essay: The Writer as Carpenter

The instructor returns an essay to a student and on the top of the page is written: "Good work. Revise the essay. Use stronger verbs."

by Art Halbrook

The key word here is "revise". As we all well know, "Revise your work" has echoed throughout classrooms for decades and although the word "revision" may not be used specifically in all contexts, the idea is essentially the same. The student must locate errors within the written text and then set about reducing these errors. Moreover, while the instructor generally has some idea about where such revision activity will take the essay—does the student know?

Let's examine revision and its role within a multi-step writing process. In many ways, revision may be equated to remodeling a house: "When a house is to be remodeled, the owners have two options. First, they can simply change the appearance of the house by painting, adding siding, or making other external alterations. Second, they can change the structure of the house by replacing load-bearing walls or adding rooms." (Faigley, L. & Witte, S. 1981. *Analyzing revision. College Composition and Communication*, p. 32.)

Thus, revision operates on two levels. Surface revision, sometimes labeled external revision, relates to improving the format or physical appearance of the essay. Such changes involve the straightening of margins, the addition of a title, improving the handwriting, or placing spaces between paragraphs. In addition, this type of revision may also involve changes in punctuation, spelling, and capitalization.

The other level is structural revision, or internal revision, and involves changes at the clause, sentence, and textual levels. Here, revision focuses on such changes as eliminating fragments and run-ons, reorganizing sentences within a paragraph and paragraphs within an essay, developing ideas, and clarifying meaning.

Revision is not a mystical process, and one of the primary goals of the instructor is to remove this perception.

Being issued this call to arms—go forth and revise—the student now embarks on this bi-level remodeling project. Through the training provided by the instructor, the student must be able to determine the nature of the improvements needed—what should be removed, what should be modified, what should remain the same. For many, the task is not an easy one. The student ponders: "Let's see. That word doesn't look right. And that verb isn't right and I wonder if I have too many of those words? Is that a sentence? Why are those words circled? Why is that sentence marked out? Oh, yeah, make it longer. That's the key. And bigger words. And I need to write neater and fix a lot of stuff." Obviously, the changes the student makes will vary considerably—some will have a positive impact while others will not.

Essentially, the student attempts to make revisions that will improve the essay, hoping that these changes will likewise improve the essay score. There exist several major caveats, however. What if the student is unable to discern problems with the text? What if the problems are discovered and the student is unable to correct them? Moreover, which revisions will improve or hurt the text and which will be little more than cosmetic dressing?

With the road to effective revision beset with so many obstacles, what can instructors do to teach students effective revision techniques? A few practical guidelines may prove useful when working with students on their next textual remodeling project:

1. Students frequently need a road map. Simply asking a writer to revise may not prove effective. Develop a checklist for students to use, a checklist that focuses both on external as well as internal revision. As the students grow as writers, the checklist can be expanded to meet various needs.

2. Being aware of errors is not enough. This scenario is similar to asking a carpenter to rebuild a house—as alluded to earlier—but finding that the carpenter can not read a blueprint. Discovering a problem is but the first step in solving the puzzle. Deciding on how to correct it should be the next step.

3. Revision is oftentimes best accomplished through modeling. Consider making copies of an essay

which needs both external and internal revision, distribute this essay to each writer, and then discuss what techniques might be used to improve the essay.

4. Reading and responding groups can prove instrumental in the revision process. Such groups can provide excellent forums for discussing methods for improving individual pieces of writing. However, what happens when individuals who are weak in grammar and lack an understanding of how to improve idea development are placed in such groups? Who will decide where the problems have occurred and how the essay can be improved?

The instructor will be wise to model how such a group will function and the role each writer can play. Moreover, an effort should be made to place one of the better writers within each of the groups.

5. Mastering internal revision techniques is essential. Too often, students make surface level changes. The spelling is better, the handwriting clearer, and the commas more appropriately placed. Despite these changes, most substantive problems still exist. Although surface revision serves an essential role, the need to understand and apply internal revision techniques is far more important.

To express ideas clearly, to provide substantive details and examples, to organize sentences and paragraphs effectively, to incorporate language appropriate to the audience, and to use proper grammatical constructions—these are the revision goals from which a stronger essay emerges. These changes, like the remodeling of a house, go beyond new paint and wallpaper. They strengthen and expand the structure, supporting new beams, raising new walls, creating new rooms.

6. Instructional strategies should be tailored to the needs of the writer. Studies have shown that less successful writers rely heavily on surface revisions which do not substantially improve the quality of the essay. Moreover, their efforts at more complex revision seldom produce enhanced essay scores.

More successful writers produce longer essays, make more substantive changes to their texts, and evidence a better understanding of revision techniques.

Conversely, the more successful writers produce longer essays, make more substantive changes to their texts, and evidence a better understanding of revision techniques. Given this performance dichotomy, instructors must be responsive to the needs of both groups of writers. Instructional strategies that might prove useful to one group of writers may not be as effective for others.

7. Expanding text is often the key. Students with less writing ability may profit from revision strategies which encourage them to expand text—developing a phrase into a sentence, a sentence into a paragraph, a paragraph into an essay.

8. Revision is recursive rather than linear and should occur throughout the writing process. Revision is a continuous process, operative from the moment a topic is formulated until the final written piece is completed. Instructors should reinforce the notion that students should constantly evaluate and reevaluate what they have written, as well as establish and develop strategies for the refinement of text.

9. Students do not become better at revision by simply talking about revision. They become better by writing and rewriting—in different modes, for different audiences, and on as frequent a basis as possible.

Revision is not a mystical process, and one of the primary goals of the instructor is to remove this perception. However, as students progress as writers and work on building better constructed essays, all will need help at some time. Building a better house does not come easily; remodeling can be a demanding process. Instructors can provide assistance by teaching students how to revise independently, keeping them ever aware that the houses they build will undergo many renovations.

Through revision, students should be able, without assistance, to develop and organize essays and then objectively view and effectively revise their creations. Thus, they become the architects, the project directors, the builders, the remodelers, and, ultimately, the owners.

Arthur M. Halbrook, Ph.D. is the Writing Assessment Specialist for the GED Testing Service.

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For GED Examiners

Handy Facts Help Busy Examiners Spread GED Info

GED Examiners often act as front-line ambassadors, representing the program not only to potential examinees and educators, but also to local politicians, parents, business people, and the media. A set of key facts and information can be an invaluable aid, whether incorporated into a presentation, posted in a reception area, or simply tacked up near the phone.

Just for fun, check your "GED IQ" using the quiz on this page. Regardless of how you do, consider clipping the facts in this column and keeping them handy for your next encounter with the public.

What are the GED Tests?

- The GED Tests are developed by the GED Testing Service of the American Council on Education, a non-profit association. They are administered in all U.S. states and territories, most of Canada (except Quebec), and overseas.
- The tests are rigorous—only two-thirds of traditional high school graduates meet the passing standards.
- The GED Tests incorporate national and state educational initiatives, curriculum reforms, and rising state standards. They are also a strong measure of almost all the skills considered essential for employment by the U.S. Department of Labor's SCANS report.

Who takes the GED Tests?

- Approximately one in seven high school diplomas awarded annually (14 percent) is a GED diploma.
- In 1996, 64 percent of GED candidates reported that they planned to continue their education or training beyond the high school level.
- The average age of test-takers is about 25; more than 70,000 people over age 40 were tested in 1996.

What are the benefits of the GED Tests?

- One out of twenty (five percent) of first-year college students are GED graduates.
- In college, GED graduates perform about the same as traditional high school graduates in comparisons of grade point average and number of credit hours completed.
- On average, GED graduates earn $2,040 more per year than

continued on page 12

What's Your "GED IQ?"

1. T F **The GED program is operated by the federal government.**
2. T F **Time limits on the tests may be waived for persons with disabilities.**
3. T F **You must be a citizen in order to take the GED Tests.**
4. T F **The GED Tests were first developed for World War II veterans.**
5. T F **The Province of Quebec offers the GED Tests in French only.**

(answers on page 12)

New Materials Support Adult Ed Teachers, Students

The City School District of Albany, NY and Albany Educational Television have new tools to aid adult educators and their students.

"Work Connections" integrates basic academic, interpersonal, and information systems skills with occupational education and skills used in health care, office, and optical careers. A supplemental database of instructional strategies targeted to different occupations, performance levels, and special populations. The project was built with input from adult educators across the state.

A staff development videotape series is in the works for teachers who are new to adult education. Each tape comes with supplementary information and resources. Two titles are now available: "Knowing Your Adult Students and Meeting their Needs" covers adult literacy programs and the diverse populations they serve. "Mandated Attendance: Making It Work," offers strategies for meeting students' needs as well as motivating and empowering them.

The first in another series, "Parents and Children Learning Through Play," helps adult students prepare for and assume the roles of first teacher and advocate for their children and to illustrate effective parent-school partnerships.

The projects were developed for the New York State Education Department Office of Workforce Preparation and Continuing Education, using Section 353 funds.

For more information, contact: City School District of Albany/Albany Educational TV, 27 Western Ave., Albany, NY 12203, phone (518) 465-4741.

Department of Labor to Award $184 Million in Welfare-to-Work Grants

The December 30th, 1997, Federal Register announces the Department of Labor's first RFPs for FY 98 discretionary grants-in-aid to promote welfare-to-work.

Areas of special interest include: programs targeted to specific subgroups (e.g., noncustodial parents, people with learning disabilities, and persons for whom substance abuse is a barrier to employment), development of transportation and child care systems, integrated work/learning strategies, creation of flexible job opportunities (including self-employment) that provide adequate income, proactive strategies to involve employers, programs that help women access nontraditional occupations; and plans for "One-Stop" service centers.

Of the $184 million available, 70 percent of funds are slated for cities with large concentrations of poverty and 30 percent is reserved for pockets of poverty in rural areas.

Additional funding is available for FY 98 and will be covered in subsequent announcements. The Department of Labor expects that most of the grants will be between $1 and $5 million and should serve a minimum of 100 eligible participants. Proposals that do not fit these ranges should explain how the project will serve the community.

The deadline for applications is 2:00 p.m. (Eastern time) March 10, 1998.

For information and copies of the needed forms, go to http://www.doleta.gov or contact Mr. Willie Harris, Grant Management Specialist, Division of Acquisition Assistance, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration SGA/DAA 98-004, 200 Constitution Ave. NW, Room S4203, Washington, DC 20210, (202) 219-8694.

NIFL Offers Free Public Awareness Materials

The National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) has prepared new TV, radio and print ads for the "Literacy: It's a Whole New World" campaign. The spots are specifically designed to inform the public as well as policymakers about the value of adult literacy services. Public service announcements have been distributed to radio and television stations across the U.S. Where literacy organizations have called the stations' public service directors and asked them to run the PSAs, "the messages are running and the national response has been extraordinary," says NIFL's Carolyn Staley.

Information folders are also available for distribution to newspapers, magazines, businesses, civic clubs and houses of worship. The tapes and print materials are free. Call the NIFL Clearinghouse, (800) 228-8813.

Boring is as Boring Does?

The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory offers "Six Symptoms of a Boring Teacher:"

1. Maintaining a monotone voice and using infrequent eye contact.
2. Day in and day out lecturing using notes on the board as the sole visual aid.
3. Reading the text and paraphrasing what was read.
4. Passing out worksheets on a daily basis.
5. Regularly instructing students to read the chapter and answer the questions at the end.
6. Standing behind the lectern, never moving and expecting students to remain seated, never moving.

Symptoms of bored students include: Watching the clock, restlessness, slouching and/or sleeping, plodding through work with dull awareness, and not paying attention.

For more information about improving teaching techniques contact your State Adult Literacy Resource Center or the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 101 SW Main St., Suite 500, Portland, OR 97204

Reprinted, with our thanks, from ***The Buzz****, Pennsylvania Adult Education's Professional Newsletter, (Vol. 17, No 1., September 1997)*

Thanks! Really!

Many thanks to the folks at KET for their help in composing last month's cover story about the revised Spanish-language GED Tests (see vol. 14, no. 6; November/December 1997).

Due to a lack of space, we were not able to give them the credit they deserve. A similar story claimed the front page of the Fall 1997 ***KET Adult Learning Quarterly***...and we're grateful for the time and effort it saved us!

If you always do what you always did, you will always get what you always got.

—Jackie ("Moms") Mabley

Handy Facts, from page 10

those who do not finish high school, and their wages grow at a faster rate after earning the credential.

Several experienced Chief Examiners say that being organized is one of the top qualities they need to be effective at their job—and most insist that it doesn't come naturally. Having a few GED facts handy is one step, they say, toward making it all run a little more smoothly.

*If you have a suggestion to share with other GED Examiners, please send it to: "For GED Examiners," **GEDItems**, One Dupont Circle, NW, Washington, DC, 20036.*

Answers to Quiz

1. (F), see article; 2. (F), see 1997 GED Examiner's Manual, Sec. 7; 3. (F), ibid., Sec. 5; 4. (T), ibid., Sec. 2; 5. (F), see article.

GED Graduate to Retire from Arkansas Program

Emma E. Rhodes, Ed.D., GED Administrator for Arkansas, announced that she will retire in February. Having left school at age 15, she brought to her work not only the experience of a practiced adult educator, but also the valuable perspective of the adult learner and GED graduate.

When she returned to school to earn her GED diploma, Emma was a 24-year-old mother of five. Five years and two more children later, her husband died, leaving her to support the family. She earned her doctorate in 1987 and since then has been a spokesperson for the GED program. In 1995 she was named one of the state's "Top 100 Women."

Last year, Dr. Rhodes also served on the GED Test Security Task Force.

Hocking Wins Service Award

The Region III Leadership Committee of the University Continuing Education Association (UCEAS) has awarded its 1997 Outstanding Service to Continuing Education Award to Molly Hocking, Chief Reader and Scoring Site Director of the Texas GED Scoring Center.

The award is given each October to an individual at a member institution with eleven or more years of service in continuing education. The scoring center is located at the University of Texas at Austin.

"Molly continually seeks ways to support testing centers and adult ed programs," said Cathy Erwin of the Texas Education Agency. The scoring center provides services to several jurisdictions outside Texas and has received high marks from customers for its service.

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Admissions and Scholarships for GED Graduates

Guidelines for Interpreting Scores

A 1990 survey found that almost all (92 percent) of the colleges and universities in the U.S. have policies to admit students without a traditional high school diploma; most specifically include GED graduates. About three quarters of U.S. colleges and universities accept the GED as equivalent to a traditional diploma for purposes of admission.

Unlike traditional high school graduates, however, GED graduates can't present completed high school transcripts to the admissions or financial aid officer. College officials indicate that they are interested in considering GED graduates for admission and financial aid. They frequently ask for help in interpreting GED scores and relating these to traditional admissions criteria (e.g., rank in graduating class; grade point averages). This article is intended to provide information that can be useful to admissions officers.

College Admissions for GED Graduates

Each year, some half million adults complete high school by earning GED diplomas. These graduates have demonstrated that their general education skills surpass those of at least 33 percent of the national graduating high school seniors in the core content areas of a traditional high school program of study. Accordingly, the American Council on Education's Commission on Educational Credit and Credentials recommends that persons who earn GED diplomas be considered high school graduates for the purposes of college admissions.

Percentile ranks...can be interpreted as ranks in the national graduating class of high school seniors.

The GED Tests are intended to measure the lasting outcomes associated with a four-year high school program of study in five areas: Writing Skills; Social Studies; Science; Interpreting Literature and the Arts; and Mathematics. Individual test results are expressed as standard scores ranging from 20 to 80 on each of the five tests.

Participating states award a high school equivalency credential to individuals who earn a minimum score of 40 on each test and an average standard score of 45 or better across all five tests. Participating Canadian provinces and territories require that candidates earn a minimum of 45 on each test to qualify for the credential.

GED standard scores are normalized scores based on a representative sample of graduating high school seniors (for Canada, grade 12 students) tested in the spring of their graduating year. These samples approximate the population with respect to cultural, socioeconomic, geographic region, and other factors. Approximately two-thirds of each norm group meet the passing score requirements.

Standard scores and associated senior percentile ranks are used to describe the skills of adults who take the GED Tests. GED standard scores have these properties:

- The average (median) standard score for recent graduating high school seniors is 50 for each of the five tests.
- The standard deviation is 10 points for recent U.S. graduating high school seniors.
- About two thirds of the seniors earn scores between 40 and 60; standard scores below 30 or above 70 are earned by only about two percent of seniors.
- The percentage of graduating seniors at or below each GED standard score value is the same for each of the five tests.
- The percentile ranks reported on Official GED Score Reports are those for high school graduating seniors, not for adult examinees.

The first GED standard score scale was based on a sample of U.S.

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"Making it Count" for Communities

by Joan Chikos Auchter

A recent conference session titled "The Street Value of the GED" provided an interesting spin on the worth of a high school equivalency diploma. The focus, traditionally, has been on the individual.

What counts for the person who comes to take the tests? Accomplishing a personal goal and reaching a traditional milestone—earning a high school equivalency diploma. While some candidates take the tests just to meet that milestone, the major reason most report is further education or training (68 percent in 1997; an increase of 14 percentage points since 1990). Many others take the tests to get a job or qualify for a promotion. Earning a high school equivalency diploma by passing the GED Tests allows GED graduates to get to the same starting gate as those with a traditional diploma.

How might the GED count for educational systems and their communities? Businesses, for example, consider the educational level of the labor force before making a decision to move in and locate a new plant. Often, CEOs rely on high school graduation statistics as a gauge of the educational level of potential workers. While there are major and model workplace instructional programs throughout the U.S., their results are not always included in the aggregate statistics that provide a snapshot of the communities' achievement level.

How can we gain full recognition for the value of our adult education and GED testing programs that credential some half million adults each year? One easily attainable method is counting GED graduates in high school completion statistics. Do you know how many adults without high school diplomas live in your jurisdiction? The numbers are presented on page 10. Compare that number with our preliminary 1997 credentialing statistics.

In the United States there are more than 45.5 million adults who have not finished high school; in Canada, more than 5 million. In 1997, the GED program credentialed one percent of that population. During the same time, another estimated 700,000 students left high school without completing their studies. It is fortunate that varied methods are available to those who wish to earn a high school diploma; the challenge of reaching the other 99 percent is a good topic for a future article!

It is surprising that, often, those who prepare the high school completer tallies in each jurisdiction are not aware of the valuable data source provided by the success of GED and other non-traditional high school credential programs. GED Administrators count and report GED graduates each year. In the United States, Common Core of Data (CCD) Coordinators in each jurisdiction count and report dropout completion data based on high school enrollment records collected by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

[Many]...are not aware of the valuable data source provided by the success of GED.

We checked with NCES and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) to see who they recognize as high school completers. In recent years, NCES and CCSSO have convened task forces to develop a new high school completion statistic. At CCSSO's request, the GED Testing Service now reports GED credentials awarded to candidates 19 and younger so that the "Chiefs" can consider including GED recipients in their state counts of high school completers.

The Graduation Rates Task Force, meeting in January 1997, recommended a rate that included all completers, including GED recipients. NCES proposes four categories for high school completion:

Regular Diploma Recipient: students receiving a traditional diploma upon completion of all course and performance requirements, during previous

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school year and subsequent summer (excludes all non-traditional diploma programs).

Other Diploma Recipient: persons 19 or younger receiving a diploma upon completion of all course and performance requirements for regular diploma, through non-traditional or alternative programs (e.g., adult high school, external diploma program; excludes GED).

High School Equivalency Recipient: persons 19 or younger receiving diploma or other certificate upon completion of GED testing (or other state-approved test of general education) and satisfaction of any other jurisdictional requirements (e.g., civics course).

Other Completers: students receiving a credential for meeting criteria that does not include course and performance requirements for regular diploma (e.g., certificate of attendance; excludes GED).

GED recipients represent a dropout recovery program, a measure of academic performance, rather than a school performance outcome. Therefore, one could argue the wisdom of each jurisdiction having a district-wide indicator of educational outcomes that includes GED recipients as well as traditional graduates. This method of counting completers gives each jurisdiction maximum flexibility about how to report educational attainment in the respective jurisdiction. These figures can be of significant value to your local school district in evaluating the effectiveness of the dropout recovery measures currently in use. It's worth the effort to ensure that our non-traditional graduates are included in the count of each educational system's annual rolls of high school completers.

Joan Chikos Auchter is the Executive Director of GEDTS.

GED Graduate Story

Putting "Education First" Pays off for Arizona Woman

by Linda Miller

A Phoenix woman who struggled with poverty, failing eyesight, and the death of her spouse before obtaining her high school equivalency diploma has been named the country's "Outstanding Adult Learner."

The award was presented to Sophronia Cuspard-Samuel in Cincinnati on November 12, 1997, as part of the annual conference of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE).

Sophronia, now 50, received her GED diploma in 1997 through Rio Salado (AZ) College's Adult Basic Education program. The program offers GED preparation and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes to nearly 12,000 Arizona residents each year.

The award has changed Sophronia's views about what she can accomplish. "I have more confidence in myself and know I can do whatever I set my mind to do. There is no obstacle you cannot overcome."

As a child in Oklahoma, Sophronia was only able to get a third-grade education before she had to leave school to work in the fields with the rest of her family. Later, she worked for the same employer for 24 years before the company closed abruptly in 1994. It was then that she decided to pursue the diploma that had eluded her most of her life.

"I was determined to put my education first," she said. "Nothing but death would stand in the way."

It took the former seamstress more than 2,300 hours to complete the Rio Salado program and complete the GED Tests successfully.

continued on page 9

An exuberant Sophronia Cuspard-Samuel is surrounded by her grandchildren at Rio Salado College's GED graduation day.

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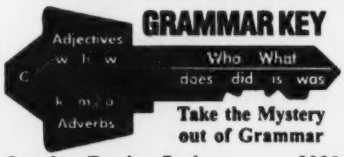

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Interpreting Scores, from page 1

graduating high school seniors tested in 1943. Subsequent standardization studies have been conducted periodically. The GED standard scores currently being reported are based on the 1996 standardization study. Testing of seniors occurs each year; scores are restandardized only when seniors show significant changes. The GED Tests undergo regular revision to ensure that the content and skills measured by the tests remain closely matched to the major expected outcomes of completing a four-year program of study.

Percentile ranks from the most recent standardization can be interpreted as ranks in the national graduating class of high school seniors. Because there is wide variation in academic standards and grading systems, current data do not permit grade point conversions to be made for GED standard scores.

Some colleges require GED scores that are higher than those required by the state for graduation. In such cases, the GED graduate must retest to earn the required scores, or provide data from other academic achievement tests to qualify for admissions.

The American Council on Education issues these recommendations to its member institutions:

- Unless admissions policies for traditional high school graduates require a graduating class rank above the 25th percentile, GED graduates should be admitted.
- If a minimum class rank is normally required for admission, the information in the accompanying table can be used to set an appropriate GED standard score and scholarship equivalents. For example, if the school generally admits traditional graduates in the upper half of their classes, it should require GED graduates to present average standard scores of at least 50. If merit scholarships go to seniors graduating in the top ten percent of their classes, similar awards should be made to GED graduates with average standard scores of 62 or better.
- If applicants are routinely asked to submit admissions test (e.g., ACT, SAT) scores, GED graduates should be required to do the same. Institutions should not substitute GED scores for admissions test scores.
- Because the GED Tests reflect general educational skills and not mastery in specific courses, counseling and testing may be needed to place a GED graduate in the appropriate course level.
- Scores from the GED Tests should not constitute the sole basis for admission.

This article is an update of a popular 1990 GED Testing Service fact sheet. For more information, call GEDTS at (202) 939-9490.

Graduating Class Rank and GED Standard Score Equivalents

National Class Rank	Average Standard Score[1]
Top 1%	68
Top 2%	66
Top 3%	65
Top 5%	64
Top 10%	62
Top 15%	60
Top 20%	58
Top 25%	57
Top 33%	54
Top 40%	52
Top 50%	50
Top 67%	46[2]
Top 70%	45

[1] Without additional requirements. U.S. GED graduates earning a) an average of 45 and b) a minimum standard score of 40 on each test rank in the top 67%.

[2] Canadian GED graduates earning at least a 45 on each test rank in the top 66% of recent grade 12 graduates.

Plan to Improve Access Depends on Uniformity

Requesting Accommodations for Specific Learning Disabilities

by Fred Edwards

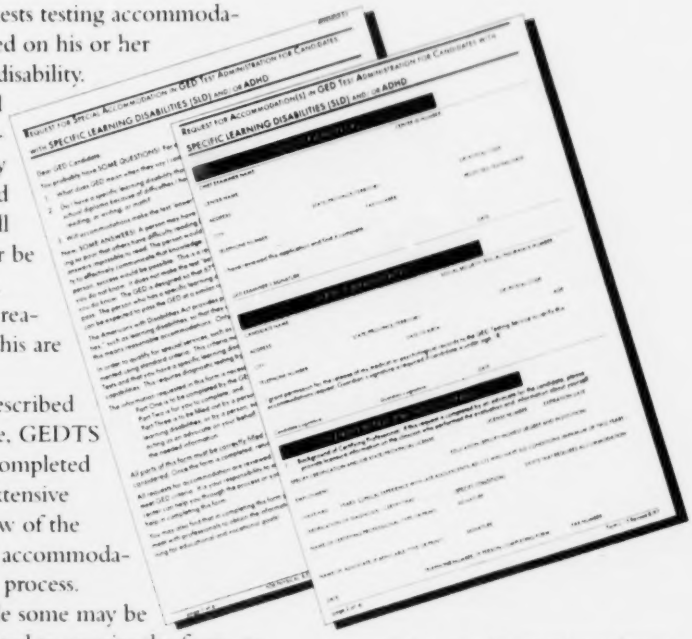
With the release of the 1997 ***GED Examiner's Manual***, the GED Testing Service (GEDTS) revised the form, "Request for Special Accommodations in GED Test Administration for Candidates with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) and/or ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)."

The revision is the result of extensive consultation with state, provincial, and territorial GED Administrators, GED Examiners, legal experts, other testing agencies that provide accommodations, disabilities rights advocates, as well as educational and psychological specialists in the field of adults with learning disabilities.

The new Form L-15 is a key element in...[an] initiative to improve access to legal accommodations for a segment of the GED candidate population that is, by many estimates, underserved.

Because the GED program serves some 800,000 GED candidates each year at more than 3,000 testing centers in the U.S., Canada, their territories, and overseas, it is essential that the program maintain a consistent method and standards for requesting accommodations.

For this reason, GED Examiners *must* provide candidates with the revised four-page Form L-15, found in Appendix E4 of the 1997 ***GED Examiner's Manual***, when the candidate requests testing accommodations based on his or her learning disability. Outdated and independently developed forms will no longer be accepted.


Request for Special Accommodation in GED Test Administration for Candidates with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) and/or ADHD
Request for Accommodation(s) in GED Test Administration for Candidates with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) and/or ADHD

Our reasons for this are many:

- As described above, GEDTS has completed an extensive review of the SLD accommodations process. While some may be tempted to rewrite the form, to do so would require similar investments of time, money, and expertise at the state and national levels, as well as additional efforts to correlate the information non-standard forms contain to the standard L-15.
- A new brochure from GEDTS will explain the process of requesting accommodations. This brochure has undergone the same review process as Form L-15 and refers to it specifically in describing the procedure for the candidate. Since the brochure is designed so that *any* GED candidate *anywhere* can understand how to document their need for accommodations, it is essential that all testing centers have *and use* Form L-15.
- A soon-to-be-released training video for GED Examiners gives step-by-step instructions about the process of requesting accommodations. The L-15 forms the basis for the discussion.
- Along with GEDTS educational consultant Neil Sturomski, our psychological consultant, Kathleen Ross-Kidder, Ph.D., has designed a training and certification program for state, provincial, and territorial GED Administrators. This three-day training session will help GED Administrators become better aware of the needs of adults with learning disabilities and to master the process of evaluating requests for accommodations for adults with specific learning disabilities. Again, these sessions follow the steps set in place by Form L-15.

continued on page 12

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Decoding the Financial Aid Mystery

Increasing numbers of GED graduates say they want to go to college or vo-tech after earning their GED diploma. However, the process of obtaining financial aid for college is a mystery that can prove daunting to many.

The early spring is an ideal time to begin work on plans for the next academic year. Not only is graduation time nearing, it's time to file tax returns—documents that play a key role in completing financial aid applications. There are three general types of aid:

- Loans—money that the student must repay with interest
- Grants and scholarships—money given to the student because of need or merit
- Work-Study—money the student earns by working at a university or non-profit job

If it doesn't grow on trees...

Where does financial aid come from? Approximately two-thirds of all financial aid comes from U.S. Department of Education programs. Traditional aid includes Pell Grants, which are based on need, and Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOGs), established to ensure that even the poorest among us can attend college. There are several types of low-interest programs; some make loans based on financial need, such as Stafford and Perkins loans, others (unsubsidized Stafford Loans, PLUS and Consolidation Loans) are not based on need. The federal government also funds work-study programs.

The AmeriCorps program provides educational awards in return for work in community service. After service, AmeriCorps members can use the funds to pay current college expenses or to repay federal student loans. Some loan debts, such as those from Perkins loans, may be canceled for borrowers who choose certain high-demand jobs after graduation—for example, law enforcement officers or bilingual teachers.

Most state governments have an office which acts as a clearinghouse for student aid information, usually located in the office responsible for higher education. These clearinghouses can provide information about state-administered aid. Some states, such as Georgia and Arkansas, have specially established scholarship funds exclusively for GED graduates.

In addition, the community college system in many states serves as a source of financial aid and guidance. And, at the institution(s) the graduate is considering, financial aid officers are a prime resource for information about what additional grants, loans, scholarships, and work opportunities are available directly from their institution.

Labor unions, employers, associations, and corporate foundations can be a source of financial aid. For example, Wal-Mart offers assistance to employees and their children. The Ohio Association for Adult and Continuing Education awards merit scholarships to GED graduates. Local Veterans Affairs offices may have funding for the spouse or dependent of a veteran. Unions often help pay to educate employees, members, and their children.

Who is eligible for financial aid?

For most federal aid programs, the GED graduate must be a regular student, admitted or already enrolled and working toward a degree or certificate in an eligible program. He or she must be a U.S. citizen (or eligible noncitizen) and hold a valid social security number. To continue receiving aid, he or she must make satisfactory academic progress. In most cases, aid is based on financial need, so the GED graduate must demonstrate that he or she needs additional money to attend college.

Forms, special programs, and trained personnel are all in place to bring postsecondary education within reach of those who are willing to go through the process.

The key to demonstrating this need is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Available from high schools, many libraries, and the U.S. Department of Education, it is, in many cases, the only form the student will have to complete. It is available in a paper version as well as a Windows-compatible computer program.

To complete the FAFSA, the student will need to have his or her tax return information for the previous year handy. He or she should carefully follow the clear step-by-step directions and keep a photocopy of the completed form and documentation. Applicants can call a special phone number for help.

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Financial Aid, from page 7

Federal student aid programs are established on the idea that people who have access to financial support from their parents should not receive need-based student aid at the expense of people who do not. The FAFSA contains questions to determine whether the applicant is a dependent or independent student. Dependent students must report their parents' assets and income. Independent students include those who are married or orphaned, have legal dependents, or who are (or were) wards of the court. In some cases, the student can be reclassified.

Several weeks later, the applicant will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) that can be shown to financial aid officers. It also can be sent electronically to many institutions.

How did they come up with that?

When a person applies for federal student aid, the information he or she reports is used in a mathematical formula. The formula determines the amount the person (and his or her family, if he or she is a dependent) can be expected to pay toward his or her education. This number is called the Expected Family Contribution (EFC). If the EFC is below a certain level, the person is eligible for a Pell Grant. Those with the lowest EFC numbers are eligible to receive FSEOGs.

The financial aid administrator at the institution calculates how much it costs to attend the school—tuition, books, housing, food—again, according to an established formula, and then subtracts the EFC. For a person attending less than half-time, the cost of attendance includes tuition, fees, and an allowance for books, supplies, transportation and child care. The result is the amount of grant, loan, and work-study money the person needs to attend. For aid from other sources, a similar system may be used that requires the applicant to complete another form.

Education as a consumer item

When considering a college, look for the features, such as interesting programs of study, convenient location or schedules, that you need and want in an education. Be prepared to ask questions that give an indication of the school's quality: find out about the school's accreditation and licensing status, its loan default rate, how the school determines academic progress, where it gets its job placement figures. See if any complaints have been filed with consumer protection agencies or the chamber of commerce.

For example, if the school has a high loan default rate, some types of federal aid may not be available. If a school advertises its job placement rate, it must also publish recent statistics that back up its claim and provide this information to prospective students before they apply. School personnel should be able to tell you about the financial aid program—what is available, procedures for applying, the selection process, and so on.

When it comes time to look at the costs, remember that, as with other big ticket items, the sticker isn't the whole story. Forms, special programs, and trained personnel are all in place to bring postsecondary education within reach of those who are willing to go through the process. To exist, colleges need students.

Most GED graduates remember with a smile the day they finally got up the courage to start ABE classes or register for the GED Tests. Stepping into an unknown situation is always a challenge. However, it's also true that as we become accustomed to a new activity, it becomes easier, more a part of our lives. By learning about the financial aid process up front, a person can become familiar with another aspect of attending college—and could be looking back with a smile before they know it!

Resources

AmeriCorps . . . . . (800) 942-2677 . . . . . http://www.cns.gov
College Board . . . . . http://www.collegeboard.org
Peterson's . . . . . http://www.petersons.com
U.S. Department of Education. . . . (800) 4-FED-AID. . . . . http://www.ed.gov

Publications*

AFL-CIO Guide to Union Sponsored Scholarships, Awards and Student Financial Aid (AFL-CIO, 815 16th St., NW, Room 407, Washington, DC 20006). $3; free to members.

Blum, Laurie. *Free Money for College*. 4th ed. (Facts on File, 1996). $14.95.

Cassidy, Daniel J. *The Scholarship Book: The Complete Guide to Private-Sector Scholarships, Grants, and Loans for Undergraduates*. 5th ed. (Prentice Hall, 1996). $24.95.

College Costs & Financial Aid Handbook 1998 (College Board, 1997). $17.95.

Davis, H. and Kennedy, J.L. *College Financial Aid for Dummies* (IDG Books Worldwide, 1997). $19.99.

Finney, David J. *Financing Your College Degree: A Guide for Adult Students* (College Board, 1997). $15.95.

Peterson's College Money Handbook 1998. 15th ed. (Peterson's Guides, 1997). $26.95.

Pocket Guide to College Credit and Degrees: Valuable Information for Adult Learners Seeking College Degrees (American Council on Education, 1997. ACE Fulfillment, Dept. 191, Washington, DC 20055-0191). $9.95.

Tognazzini, Norman C. *Money for Adult Students* (Energeia Publishing, P.O. Box 985, Salem, OR 97308). $2.95.

Van Dusen, W.D., Van Dusen, B. and Astor, B. *10 Minute Guide to Paying for College* (Arco, 1996). $10.95.

***many bookstores offer significant discounts on the publisher's list price.**

GED Graduate, from page 3

One obstacle was her deteriorating vision due to glaucoma. Another problem was her limited academic background. "All the subjects were a struggle for me, because I had none of the basics," she says.

"I love to encourage people...But first you have to believe in yourself."

Despite her own limited schooling, Sophronia made certain that her children finished school. "I demanded this of them," she says. "Without an education, you can't succeed in life." Today her daughter Tonya is a restaurant supervisor and her son Troy is a district manager for a prominent soft drink maker. Another child is deceased.

After 18 months of study, Sophronia's most serious setback occurred when she was forced to take a seven-month leave of absence to care for her husband, Manuel, who was terminally ill with cancer. He lived long enough to see her inducted into the National Adult Education Honor Society during a special ceremony, which took place in their South Phoenix home in the spring of 1996.

"My husband was a great inspiration for me. He encouraged me up to his death," says Sophronia.

During the time of his illness, her six Rio Salado instructors continually sent course materials and books to Sophronia's home. "With teachers like that," she adds, "I couldn't give up!"

Sophronia's former instructors are now her colleagues. She works as a Rio Salado instructional aide, in the Learning Center located at the college's Maricopa Skill Center—and for the same program through which she earned her diploma.

Marie Olsen, Sophronia's former lead instructor and current work supervisor, calls her "a role model *par excellence* for older students. Instructors as well as students have met the challenge to do their best because of the confidence Sophie has placed in them."

Sophronia feels that her present position is a good match for her abilities. "I love to encourage people, and I'm able to encourage students now. My goal is to be an inspiration to others. But first you have to believe in yourself."

Linda Miller is on the marketing staff at Rio Salado College, part of the Maricopa Community College system, in Tempe, AZ.

Scientists Locate Dyslexia "Short Circuit" in Brain

Scientists revealed in early March that they now can identify the specific brain malfunctions involved in dyslexia, a chronic reading problem that affects an estimated ten million Americans. Lead researcher Sally E. Shaywitz of the Yale University School of Medicine, says that the work provides scientific confirmation for "what has previously been a hidden disability."

The research may make it possible for young people to be diagnosed earlier.

Using high-tech imaging equipment, the researchers found that the brains of people with dyslexia show extremely low activity in those areas of the brain previously demonstrated as playing a key role in linking written words with their phonic components. The research was funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

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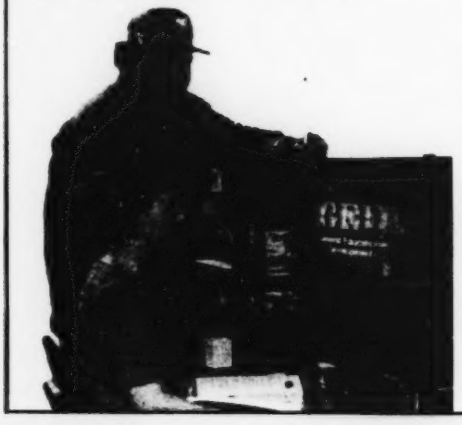
From basic reading through GED preparation, KET videos help adult students prepare for the future.



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Pre-GED Math: Math Basics
15 video programs of up to 30 minutes each, teaching real-life math that adults need at home and on the job. Helps prepare adults for more technical concepts.

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from TELEVISION AND ADULT LITERACY, a Ford Foundation report

Population of Adults Without High School Diplomas and GED Credentialing Rate, by Jurisdiction*

Jurisdiction	Pop. without diploma	GEDs issued 1997	Jurisdiction	Pop. without diploma	GEDs issued 1997
Alabama	936,269	8,039	Ohio	1,851,680	16,831
Alaska	51,195	1,563	Oklahoma	560,140	8,085
Arizona	579,369	9,802	Oregon	393,844	7,378
Arkansas	549,931	7,998	Pennsylvania	2,160,811	17,440
California	5,327,621	37,463	Rhode Island	203,614	2,592
Colorado	375,970	8,168	South Carolina	763,897	4,801
Connecticut	503,961	4,554	South Dakota	106,575	1,505
Delaware	107,443	747	Tennessee	1,144,588	13,136
Dist. Columbia	125,948	827	Texas	3,299,572	44,793
Florida	2,541,872	39,371	Utah	160,799	4,643
Georgia	1,329,996	15,557	Vermont	76,341	1,310
Hawaii	152,820	1,303	Virginia	1,099,392	9,132
Idaho	138,389	660	Washington	583,563	11,853
Illinois	1,937,684	n/a	West Virginia	432,738	4,001
Indiana	951,428	13,137	Wisconsin	721,374	7,601
Iowa	380,196	5,377	Wyoming	51,995	1,127
Kansas	325,477	5,835			
Kentucky	909,162	10,368	American Samoa	11,364	10
Louisiana	905,263	7,020	Guam	21,688	159
Maine	184,979	2,386	Micronesia	14,975	9
Maryland	754,722	5,855	No. Marianas Is.	n/a	17
Massachusetts	882,624	8,208	Panama Canal	n/a	3
Michigan	1,515,421	14,428	Puerto Rico	1,241,864	10,502
Minnesota	529,532	6,535	Virgin Islands	27,962	115
Mississippi	610,713	4,886			
Missouri	944,893	9,789	Alberta	573,165	1,401
Montana	105,698	1,903	Brit. Columbia	745,970	2,314
Nebraska	196,144	2,414	Manitoba	323,970	787
Nevada	195,739	3,931	New Brunswick	218,190	757
New Hampshire	144,234	1,616	Newfoundland	182,075	302
New Jersey	1,324,806	8,790	NW Territories	14,520	43
New Mexico	260,091	5,150	Nova Scotia	256,545	1,322
New York	3,301,373	35,425	Ontario	2,399,740	1,547
No. Carolina	1,416,966	13,871	Pr. Edward Island	36,590	182
No. Dakota	97,028	938	Yukon Territory	4,595	56

Scores earned through Canada Forces, U.S. Military, Michigan prisons, Federal prisons, U.S. Embassies & Veterans Administration hospitals are reported to the candidate's home jurisdiction for credentialing.

***(data current as of 3/27/98)**

Adult Ed Teleconference Offers Tech Tips

Join PBS LiteracyLink live to see how adult educators are using technology to improve instruction and strengthen learning for ABE and GED students. A sequel to LiteracyLink's June, 1997, award-winning program about technology planning and funding, the telecast will take place via satellite on Thursday April 23, 1998 from 2:00 until 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Through preproduced case studies and live discussions with teachers and curriculum specialists, participants will learn:

- why teachers and learners think technology is important
- how teachers begin using educational technology and overcome the barriers people often encounter
- ways in which teachers are integrating educational technologies into classroom activities
- how technology can be used to empower students toward active learning

"AND SO MY FELLOW WOMEN ASK NOT WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR EVERYONE ELSE'S HAPPINESS BUT WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR OWN."

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The program also provides examples of quick and easy technology-based learning activities.

During the program, participants can call in and share their experiences with other educators around the country or pose questions to the teachers and specialists on the panel.

Panelists will include new and experienced instructors who will share their challenges integrating new technologies into various instructional settings, including prisons and not-for-profit organizations. Also on the panel will be a researcher who specializes in instruction and adult learning and a program director who coordinates technical assistance for a network of community-based literacy providers.

For more information contact PBS at (800) 257-2578.

Testing on the Internet

A new venture-capital funded website now offers testing, to individuals and corporations. Test.com caters to a wide audience from companies that wish to screen potential employees or assess the skill level of current staff, to grade-school students and their teachers, and adults seeking information about different vocations.

Participating educators and employers can establish parameters and get graded test results on each test taker. Test takers can also receive immediate feedback. Many tests are free; others cost between $.20 and $1.00 to take. Participants, whether individuals, businesses, or institutions, establish an account from which testing fees are deducted.

For more information, call (216) 694-5744, e-mail info@test.com, or point to http://www.test.com.

New Report Details ABE Needs Across U.S.

The National Institute for Literacy announces the release of an anticipated publication, ***The State of Literacy in America: Estimates at the Local, State and National Levels***. The report is a new presentation of data commissioned by the Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education. In the report, researcher Stephen Reder provides state-by-state synthetic estimates of adult literacy proficiencies.

Online users can search for information about their city or state to get figures on, for example, the proportion of the population holding a college degree, or the estimated percentage of the performing at Level 1 on the NALS scale.

"This report will be a great tool in raising awareness and support at the local, state, and national level," writes NIFL Director Andy Hartman.

The data may be searched online at http://www.nifl.gov/reders/reder.htm. For a free copy of the report, call the NIFL Hotline at (800) 228-8813.

Study Shows GED Prep Makes a Difference

When it comes to having access to and passing the GED Tests, suburban GED candidates may have a leg up on their city-dwelling counterparts.

A study called "A Second Chance: Improving Chicago's GED Performance" shows that, in 1996, 59 percent of suburban Cook County, Illinois, residents passed the tests while 46 percent of Chicago residents earned passing scores. In 1995, those figures were 63 and 53 percent respectively. GEDTS statistics show that the statewide pass rate in 1996 was 64 percent.

The local study was conducted by the Taylor Institute and Women Employed Institute in Chicago. According to the report's authors, the discrepancy doesn't necessarily indicate that suburbanites are smarter that city dwellers, but rather may reflect suburban school districts' investment in adult ed programs.

Suburban school districts in the area offer 12-week GED prep classes, and a three-week state-required civics course, at various times during the year. The programs routinely provide students with practice tests as well as information about testing dates and locations. In contrast, says researcher Jody Raphael, the report's co-author, city dwellers find testing locations difficult to reach and "flexible and accessible GED prep services" hard to find.

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Accommodations, from page 5

The new Form L-15 is a key element in a carefully designed, comprehensive outreach initiative to improve access to legal accommodation for a segment of the GED candidate population that is, by many estimates, underserved. It may seem convenient to shorten the form, combine it with another, or turn it around to meet local or regional purposes. But doing so causes other problems—inconsistency, missing information, communication difficulties—in a way that creates more obstacle than access. Because accommodation for documented disabilities is a legal right, not a favor, that documentation process must remain intact so that it can work as it is designed.

The GED Testing Service will continue to be sensitive to issues related to adults with learning disabilities. As we learn more about learning disabilities from research and current practice, it may again be necessary to revise Form L-15. However, so that our positive outreach program can meet the needs of current GED candidates, Form L-15 must be used when requesting accommodations for learning disabilities or attention deficit disorders. For your convenience, the "GED Examiner" information section may be completed (except for the signature line) and the form photocopied before distribution. Members of the public must obtain the form from a GED Testing Center or the state, provincial, or territorial GED Administrator. If you need help locating Form L-15 or have other questions, please contact the GED Testing Service.

Fred Edwards is the Director of Client Services for the GED Testing Service. If you have questions regarding the form, training materials, or procedures for requesting accommodations, please contact him at (202) 939-9490.

Dyslexia, from page 9

In current practice, children usually are not identified as having dyslexia until third grade. In addition, people with dyslexia who are highly intelligent and motivated often remain unidentified and do not get the special instruction or accommodations, such as extra time for reading, that could allow them to demonstrate their true ability.

Dyslexia is a condition that persists throughout a person's life. However, by learning targeted techniques and strategies and having the opportunity to practice using them, people with dyslexia can significantly improve their skills.

Shaywitz and others hope that this research may make it possible for young people to be diagnosed earlier—before they experience the chronic failure that can impair their self-esteem and chances for future success.

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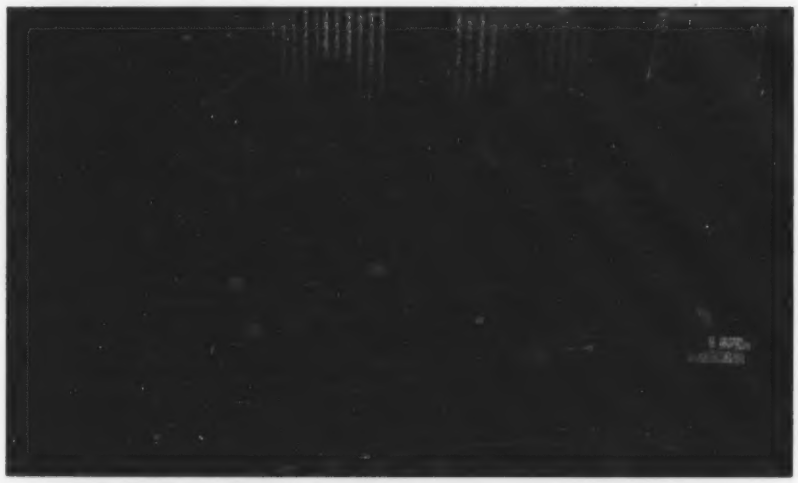
Honeywell Honors 15 Toronto Employees With GED Graduation Ceremony

by John Allston

It had all the traditional elements—nervous graduates, proud family members, gowns, speeches, pomp and circumstance. But it was not your typical high school graduation. With the average age of the graduates closer to age 40 than 18, fifteen Honeywell employees, graduates of a GED in the workplace program, proved that "it's never too late to graduate." The curtain went up on this special show precisely at 11 am on Saturday April 18, in the cafeteria of Honeywell's Scarborough, Ontario plant.

Honeywell was one of the first companies in Toronto to bring GED to its employees. When Morry Patt and I first approached Honeywell's Manager of Industrial Relations, Joe Baker, about GED, Joe quickly saw how it would be the ideal complement to the Learning for Life program already in place. For nine years, many employees had gained solid skills in language, writing, mathematics and other areas, through a close partnership with nearby Humber College—but these lifelong learners were still without a high school diploma. The GED was just what they needed.



In Scarborough, Ontario, fifteen Honeywell employees demonstrate to their colleagues that a lifetime of experience and hard study pay off on GED graduation day!

On graduation day, valedictorian Karen Orr echoed the same thought; "Years ago we started to do something, but we never got back to finish it." She described the tremendous support from colleagues, family and friends who seemed more anxious than candidates when test results were expected in the mail! Because their progress was followed so closely and their success widely noticed, the graduates know that there will soon be more GED candidates at Honeywell. Employees are already asking when the next program will start!

Emceed by Joe Baker, ceremony speakers included Morry Patt, who is Director of Toronto-based GED Achievement, and Linda Keirstead, Chair of Canadian Auto Workers Local 80. Director of Manufacturing John MacMillan reiterated Honeywell's commitment to education through its Learning for Life program and praised graduates for disproving the old saw "I'm too old to learn." John also announced that Honeywell had just won First Place in the Canadian Award of Excellence in Workplace Literacy competition, out of sixty companies entered.

Honeywell's GED program was provided by GED Achievement, an Ontario firm that works with employers, school boards, community agencies and individuals. The first

continued on page 6

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Survey Finds Public Overestimates College Costs; Underestimates Help Available

Washington, DC
May 25

Americans believe a college education is worth the money, but don't think college is affordable and don't know where to get reliable financial aid information, according to findings released by the American Council on Education (ACE).

The research study included 16 focus groups with parents in eight cities and a survey of 2,000 adults between ages 21 and 25. ACE commissioned the report to get accurate information about what Americans know about paying for college.

The cost of a college education was among parents' list of worries, second only to their children using illegal drugs.

The findings show that the cost of college is among Americans' top five concerns about their children. Sixty-five percent of respondents said that "the cost of a college education" was on their list of worries, second only to their children using illegal drugs (71 percent). U.S. parents worry about paying for college more than they worry about their child being a victim of a crime (64 percent), health care for their children (55 percent), or the quality of their public schools (55 percent). Additionally, far more African Americans and Hispanics think that a college education is not affordable.

The study also found that the public greatly overestimates the cost of college tuition (see table above).

"Opening doors to higher education for all Americans, regardless of their economic status, is a central goal of colleges and policymakers," said ACE President Stanley O. Ikenberry, adding that a better-informed public is only part of the equation. "Progress must be made in containing college costs while improving educational quality," he said.

To follow up on the survey as well as on recommendations made early last winter by the National Commission on the Cost of Higher Education, ACE plans to launch a national education campaign this fall to address the college costs issue.

The American Council on Education is the umbrella association for U.S. colleges and universities. Its members include nearly 2,000 accredited, degree-granting institutions and higher education organizations. The GED Testing Service and the Center for Adult Learning and Educational Credentials are part of ACE. For more information about the college cost survey and findings, go to http://www.acenet.edu/programs/dgr/reports.html. The monograph is available for $20.00, plus $3.50 shipping and handling, by calling (301) 604-9073.

U.S. College Costs: Real vs. Imagined

	Tuition		Total Cost	
	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual
Community College (in-state)	$4,026	$1,501	$9,054	$3,089
Four-year Public (in-state)	$9,694	$3,111	$17,259	$8,679
Four-year Private	$17,897	$13,664	$28,532	$20,378

source: American Council on Education

WINNER
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AWARDS FOR PUBLICATION EXCELLENCE

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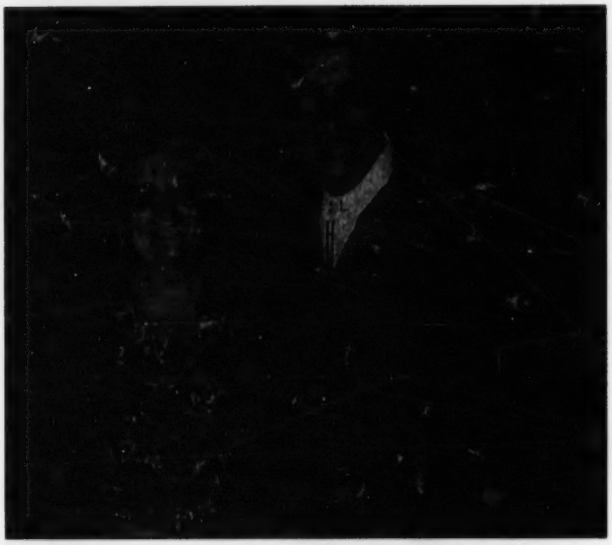
The Tassel IS Worth The Hassle: Implementing Strategic Plans for GED Success at Mayland Community College

by Liz Silvers

At Mayland Community College, the ABE/GED Team focuses on taking what the student has and using it as a starting point to help each student achieve his or her own goals. Mayland is a small college tucked into the mountainous far western corner of North Carolina, about an hour northeast of Asheville. Serving students age 16 and older, the college provides a wide variety of services to meet local needs. Several of Mayland's innovative challenges may offer inspiration to GED programs in other regions.

30 Grads in 30 Days

Mayland's GED program works toward graduating at least one student each school day. This challenge, "30 Grads in 30 Days," was implemented four years ago and is a driving force in the program. To date, the numbers for this semester are right on target. Between June 1997 and February 1998, the program graduated 114 students. With this year's summer graduation date moved up into May, the ABE/GED Team expects to meet this year's goal of 200 graduates. Students must successfully complete the five GED Test by mid-April to participate in the May ceremony.



Mayland Community College's GED Secretary/Assistant Maisie Howell, poses with the program's oldest GED graduate, Fred Hoehn.

This year the college will celebrate its 25th "class" of GED graduates. As of spring 1998, some 4,000 adults have earned their GED diplomas at Mayland since 1972. The teachers and examiners have planned a major celebration, complete with prizes from MCC's Partners-In-Education.

Partners in Education

The Partners-In-Education (PIE)are local businesses and industries who support the college's ABE/GED Program. The initiative offers another way to honor the

continued on page 6

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Two Math Veterans Offer Experience, Viewpoints

by Mike Fitzpatrick

For eleven years, I have been teaching ABE- and GED-level mathematics in a maximum security prison. Frequent, often weekly, changes in class rosters dictate a highly individualized program of study. Under these conditions, teaching addition and subtraction, let alone exponents and order of operations, can be difficult at best. However I have found that a healthy dose of basic math concepts, and rote memorization when necessary, not only gives students the foundation necessary to advance to higher level mathematics, but the confidence as well.

Without a strong foundation in math basics, students often become frustrated when they move to the next level. Frustration leads to anxiety and distraction, which translates into frequent and careless errors. As the errors mount, so do the anxiety and frustration, until they create a barrier to learning. It really *is* a Catch 22. In order to learn, you need confidence. In order to have confidence, you need to learn.

Although I don't totally dismiss modern methods, there is often too much emphasis on a "fun and games" approach, rather than a clear, uncluttered presentation of basic ideas. Many educators want to make learning "fun," according to a definition that I think is more harmful that productive. If materials or methods aren't colorful or exciting enough, they don't measure up as effective teaching tools. In choosing this path, we have spoiled many young minds by fostering an expectation that learning should always be entertaining. To the extent that we buy into that idea, we weaken both our students and the system.

Too often we sell students short on their willingness and ability to grasp difficult material. Instead of challenging them, we allow them to say, "I can't learn this stuff." "It's too hard." "This is boring." The implication is that learning and comprehension are the teacher's responsibility, as if students have no role in their own education. By accepting that premise, we are apologizing for not being able to meet their expectations of interest and need. Who said learning is easy? Learning is work for most of us, and should be regarded as such.

Learning the fundamentals...requires concentrated, focused effort, continual repetition, and practice. Math is a discipline.

As a former coach, I have witnessed the fun of competition and winning. But winning on game day comes only after many bumps and bruises from "boring," "hard" practices. Learning the fundamentals of football, or any discipline, requires concentrated, focused effort, continual repetition, and practice. Math is a discipline. To feel pride and mastery over such a difficult body of knowledge, students must put forth just such effort.

In short, drill and practice has served us well in the past and the lack of it, in my view, is a major contributor to math failure in schools today. The state of California, in recent debates over how best to teach math, has recognized the advantages of such traditional approaches. The approach that we take in our prison classes sets out basic knowledge up front and allows the understanding of necessary principles to develop as the student matures.

Learners may not care *why* something is done a certain way in the beginning. They are often eager to learn *anything they can*. This is especially true when an interested and concerned teacher pays attention to them and treats them as worthwhile. Using self-paced videotape instruction (our learning center has had astounding success with the ***ACE MATH*** series) and individualized attention helps in this matter by subtly integrating the *why* into the *how*. Once students feel the need to know more, they will ask, and when they do, they will be able to truly understand the answer because they have been well-grounded in the basics.

Learning is a challenge, but that is what most young minds need today. We do our students a disservice when we don't insist that they overcome their dislikes and make an effort to help themselves learn.

Mike Fitzpatrick teaches mathematics at Green Bay Correctional Institution in Wisconsin.

by Sandra Manigault

As the "bad boy" of academe, mathematics has long been a very difficult subject to teach. Teachers know this well, but often puzzle over what to do to change the paradigm. There is much we can do. To begin with, we can understand what makes a poor teacher and what makes a good one.

Poor teachers are usually only quasi-prepared. They know the material, but not at the level necessary to explain it to another person. Sometimes the material is "stale," it hasn't been freshened up to make it presentable in a variety of venues. Sometimes the teacher hasn't given sufficient thought to bringing the material to life; separating the *how* of a process from the *why* and the *when* of executing it. Weak teachers know that there are glitches in the students' absorption of the material, but they do not know why the gaps exist, nor how to bridge them.

The statement, "You should know that already," has soured far too many capable students on the subject of math.

Poor teaching sometimes means assigning no homework and thereby not committing to further clarification of the material. It sometimes means taking no responsibility for a student's learning beyond the initial lecture. While a student does have a responsibility to learn for herself, the teacher does have a role in making sure the message gets through.

Good teachers are cognizant of what is happening on the opposite side of the desk. Especially in mathematics, the pace at which a teacher speaks is directly connected to how well she or he is understood. Speaking more slowly than normal gives students time to hear what is being said and to interpret it in the context of the subject under discussion.

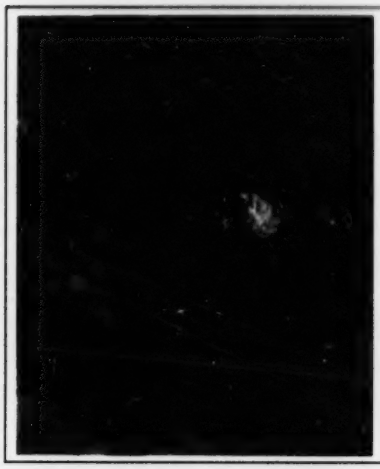
Rather than over-focusing on where *they* want to begin and what *they* want to accomplish, good teachers are aware that some students may not be prepared to keep pace. These teachers know that the statement, "You should know that already," has soured far too many capable students on the subject of math. They are ready to offer encouragement and individualized instruction to help a student fill in his weak spots. Good teachers avoid activities that can divide students' attention. Clear penmanship and neat formatting do more than set a level of expectation for students. Learners at any level cannot absorb new material well when they're distracted by difficult-to-read materials.

Helping more people to be successful at mathematics means better teaching and new paradigms. It means caring about how students are being taught. Effective math teachers do not concern themselves with "over explaining." They have to be not only willing, but able, to break a task into multiple steps, to instill reasoning and problem solving skills, and show how these can be applied in various circumstances. For adequate GED preparation, students need to be able to do a math problem two ways: they have to be able to get the answer, and they must be able to show how to get the answer. Teaching students to take a problem posed in English and write the solution in the language of mathematics requires patience and expertise.

Good teaching means being aware of the anxieties students bring to the math classroom and easing these concerns. It means supporting students, assuring them that with practice and persistence, they can *and will* understand and retain the material. It means many repetitions and constantly preparing students for the next level.

Although there is a lot of work to be accomplished, a good teacher understands the value of group activity and problem-solving. Good teaching means getting students to believe in themselves and others, to see that, although our backgrounds are different, we all want success and happiness. It means empowering students by showing them what works about mathematics and what they can do with it. I have learned that this is the greatest gift a teacher can give a student. This prepares them both to do the "hard work."

Sandra Manigault teaches mathematics at Northern Virginia Community College and is the author of ***The Book For Math Empowerment: Rethinking the Subject of Mathematics.***



Assignment #1

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 58 percent of jobs created by 2005 will require some college. Where and how a learning adult can obtain these college credits continues to change, so that's why the *Pocket Guide to College Credits and Degrees* was written–in order to provide all the latest information in an easy-to-read format for adult learners seeking to start or complete a college degree.

The Pocket Guide is available for $9.95 from the ACE Fulfillment Service, Dept. 191, Code Items, Washington, DC 20055-0191; (301) 604-9073.

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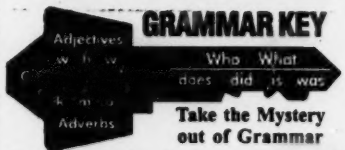

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Honeywell, from page 1

phase brought briefings to make sure that everybody understood how GED works. Next came a readiness assessment to see which adult learners were likely GED candidates right away, and who could be ready for the tests after further skills upgrading. Finally, those who met the criteria went through a six-week preparatory program. The Ministry of Education's GED Chief Examiner, Ghislaine Lefebvre, administered the tests on-site at the plant for the convenience of all.

Reporter Wendy Murphy's story made the CityTV six o'clock news. In the homes of graduates and colleagues alike, proud fingers pressed "record" to capture the stirring images of gowned graduates and their inspiring words. In a message sent over the world-wide Honeywell Headline News network, John MacMillan made certain that all branches of the international corporation knew that "Honeywell in Canada supports the GED program and encourages employees to participate as part of its Learning for Life program."

Congratulations to the graduates: Lindsay Abbey, Karen Clarke, Anne Cleveland, Bill Davidson, Corinne Green, Marina Henriquez, Lorraine Kelso, Gwen Levesque, Tho Liang, Karen Orr, Donnarene O'Toole, Robyn Pye, Kathy Shaw, Barbara Turry, and Goldie Walsh.

Honeywell Limited is Canada's leading controls company offering temperature controls and automation systems for homes and buildings, process control solutions for manufacturing plants, and navigation controls used in aviation and space. It is a subsidiary of Honeywell Inc., Minneapolis, MN.

John Allston is an associate of GED Achievement in Toronto, and a member of the GED Advisory Committee.

Strategic Plans, from page 3

GED graduates. Since June 1997, the 150 Partners-In-Education have contributed a total of $6,486 in services and merchandise to encourage local adults to complete their GED diplomas at Mayland.

Since the program began in November 1991, more than $57,000 has been donated to support Mayland's GED students. Prizes are awarded through a random drawing held each semester. GED students may register for the drawing once for each hour of GED instruction they complete at the college.

MCC's Oldest GED Graduate

When Mayland students graduate from the GED program, there is reason enough to celebrate. But last year, the GED Team had another reason: the graduation of the program's oldest grad to date, Fred Hoehn, an 83-year-old retired businessman from Florida. Upon retiring, Fred and his wife Lila began traveling, eventually settling in nearby Avery County.

Why would an 83-year-old man go back to school after completing a successful business career? "It's a personal challenge," he says. "It's a very rewarding experience to pass the tests and know you've qualified to earn a diploma. It's never to late to finish your education."

New Challenge

In holding with Fred Hoehn's philosophy of "it's never to late," the GED Team is constantly looking for new ways to help local adults achieve their educational goals. The team's efforts to provide the best education possible for the broadest selection of potential students has driven the GED Team to set a new challenge: to graduate a total of 5,000 students by the year 2000. GED "Grad-o-Meters," reflecting daily, monthly, and yearly graduate totals, are posted throughout the

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New Learning Disabilities Training Program Begins With Pilot Session June 10-13

by Fred Edwards

The GED Testing Service (GEDTS) will launch its first of four training sessions on Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) to 16 GED Administrators, Examiners and other GED staff June 10, 1998. The June pilot session will allow GEDTS to get comments and observations from participants, thus providing an opportunity to fine-tune the training program before full-scale training begins.

Work on the training model started in late 1996 when GEDTS invited a panel of experts to review its policies on accommodations. Composed of lawyers, adult education specialists, GED Administrators, and psychologists, as well as representatives from other major testing agencies and learning disabilities associations, the panel recommended that the GED Testing Service:

1. Adopt an established definition of learning disability
2. Develop clear, concise policies based on that definition; and
3. Administer the policies in a consistent manner.

Another result of the meeting was the brochure, ***How to Take the GED Tests if you Have a Learning Disability***. The brochure is targeted to GED candidates who might have specific learning disabilities so that they can better understand the process of requesting accommodations. Demand for this brochure has been very high and it's now under revision to make it clearer and more user-friendly. The revised brochure plays a key role in GEDTS' outreach program for adults with learning disabilities and will be ready for distribution this summer.

The GEDTS SLD Training is centered around Form L-15 (please refer to page 5 of the March/April ***GED Items***) and takes place over three days. Session participants will learn how to recognize a specific learning disability, how to request accommodations, when to approve requests for accommodations, and how to create links with funding sources so that needed services are available to adults with specific learning disabilities.

The first session will be offered in Washington, DC, with three regional training sessions to follow. The training facilitators are Dr. Kathleen Ross-Kidder, a licensed psychologist and faculty member at the George Washington University and Neil Sturomski, a learning disabilities specialist and adult literacy expert.

Following training, participants will undergo a certification program. Those who pass the certification are then authorized to approve requests for special testing based on SLD. The result of the training and certification process will make it possible for each jurisdiction to approve the majority of its requests for accommodation in accordance with GEDTS policy. However, GEDTS will still be available to consult with GED Administrators on more difficult cases. An analysis of current caseloads shows this to be an estimated ten to 20 percent of requests. In addition, a monitoring system will ensure that certified participants adhere to the established standards.

With a focus on consistent policies and the training needed to administer them, the GED program partners at the local, jurisdiction and national levels will be better equipped to meet the intent of the law and to improve our services to adults with specific learning disabilities.

Fred Edwards is the Director of Partner Outreach for the GED Testing Service.

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Strategic Plans, from page 6

Learning Lab to illustrate MCC's progress.

"The Tassel IS Worth the Hassle" is a slogan that reflects not only the students' hard work as they reach toward their educational goals, but also the GED Team's never-ending desire to help each student achieve these goals. Goal-setting, community support, and catchy reminders help to motivate staff and students alike when the "finish line" seems far away. As long as there is an adult without his or her GED diploma in Mitchell, Avery, or Yancey county, you can rely on the GED Team at Mayland Community College to find a way to meet that student's special needs!

Liz B. Silvers is the Coordinator of Development and Public Relations at Mayland Community College in Spruce Pine, NC. For more information, call (704) 765-6222 or email: lsilvers@mayland.cc.nc.us.

News and Notes

Secretary Congratulates DAEL

In a letter dated April 6, Education Secretary Richard W. Riley congratulates ED's Division of Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL) for earning the 'Maryland Literacy Works for Excellence' award this year. Secretary Riley told the DAEL staff, "Building partnerships with state and local governments is essential to our task," and "you have brought credit on yourselves and the Department."

Voc and Adult Ed Separated

House and Senate Committee leaders on May 22 agreed to split vocational education out of S 1186 and to retain the Senate structure for the remainder of the bill. The House bill (HR 1385) integrated the two. A joint conference committee of Representatives and Senators will next work out the remaining differences between the two bills.

GED Administrators to Meet

The 73 GED Administrators, who oversee GED testing in the U.S., Canada, and their territories, hold their annual conference in Chicago, IL, July 28 through August 1, 1998. Meeting outcomes will be published in the next *GED Items.*

Materials Target Adult Learners

Fannie Mae has teamed up with the Center for Applied Linguistics to create targeted outreach materials to help underserved Americans expand their housing options. ***How to Buy Your Own Home*** demystifies home-buying and introduces the demands of ownership. Lessons contain document literacy and math exercises, writing assignments, sample forms, and resources to be integrated with existing curriculum. A teacher's guide and up to 20 workbooks are free to literacy and ABE-level instructors. Call (800) 539-4051.

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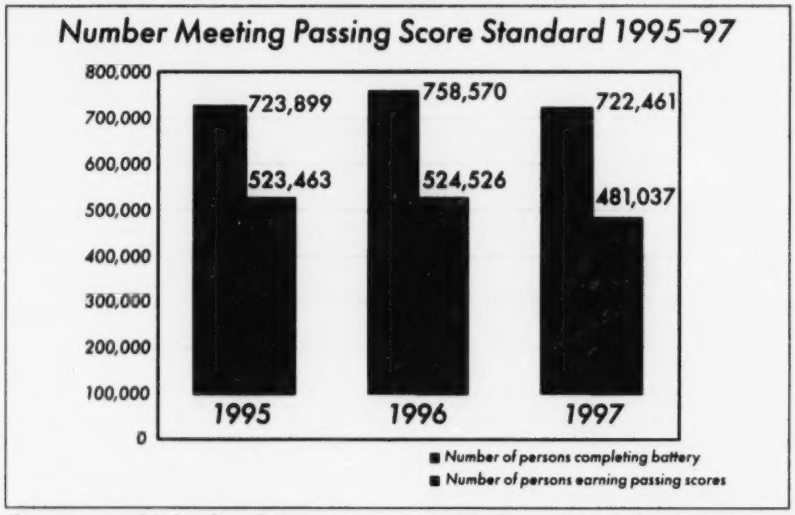
Higher Minimum Score Standard for GED Diploma Affects Passing Rate

The 1997 calendar year saw small but significant changes in the numbers of adults taking and passing the General Educational Development (GED) Tests, according to the GED Testing Service's annual statistical report, *Who Took the GED?*, released in July at the GED annual meeting in Chicago. The report attributes decreases in the number of people taking and passing the tests in 1997 to the implementation of a higher passing standard required to earn a GED high school equivalency diploma.

In a widely-publicized effort to bring standards into line with higher secondary school education standards, the GED Testing Service (GEDTS) raised the passing standard, effective January 1, 1997. "The new standard means that to earn a GED high school diploma, all GED graduates must demonstrate the ability to read, write, think, compute, and problem-solve at a level that meets or exceeds the performance of the top two-thirds of graduating high school seniors," said GEDTS Executive Director Joan Auchter.



The program-wide passing rate for the GED Tests in 1997 dropped by 3.1 percent, from 71.7 percent in 1996 to 68.6 percent last year. In the 36 jurisdictions where standards were raised, there was a drop of 3.8 percent in the overall passing rate. For those jurisdictions where the standard remained the same, there was an overall drop of two percent. Regionally, the southern region had the largest overall decrease in the passing rate (6.5 percent) but also had the largest number of states raising their passing standard.

The total number of people completing the tests in 1997 was 722,461. Record numbers of adults completed the GED Tests the previous year, most likely in an attempt to qualify for a GED diploma before the increase in the passing score took effect. Candidates completing the tests totaled 758,570 in 1996 and 723,899 in 1995. The total number of candidates earning a GED diploma in 1997 was 481,037, compared with 524,526 in 1996 and 523,463 in 19956. The 1997 total brings to more than 13 million the estimated number of adults who have received GED diplomas since 1949; more than 20 million individuals have taken the tests since they were begun during World War II.

"Based on previous experience, we expected to see a corresponding decrease in both the number of people taking the tests and in passing rates,"said Auchter. "Other changes may be at work, so further investigation is needed."

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Racing With the Winds of Change

by Joan Auchter

In 1995, we thought we had six years on familiar waters to bring out the next series of GED Tests. But in 1996, the American Council on Education (ACE) began a review of its many programs and services, including the GED Testing Service (GEDTS). The restructuring is now nearly complete and GEDTS has changed. However, our goal to introduce new tests in September, 2001 remains fixed.

How do we prepare for the journey? Five specialized in-house units (special projects, test development, information technology, partner outreach, and program operations) provide the power and flexibility needed to smoothly navigate untried waters. With new guidance systems aboard, provided by expert panels on research, specific learning disabilities, psychometrics, and field technical assistance, we are sailing ahead with plans and construction for "GED 2001."

Although real ships are dry-docked during an overhaul, the "good ship GED" has had no such break. Our crew of 19 runs a ship that requires a crew of 30, plus our four panels of experts. While we haven't always provided the level of customer service we know our partners deserve, we've done our best, working overtime to complete several successful voyages in 1998. Among other projects, we have:

- Reinstated testing outside the U.S. and Canada through a partnership with Sylvan Prometric
- Developed computerized practice tests with Contemporary and new paper-and-pencil versions with Steck-Vaughn
- Created a model of common preferred practices for evaluating and granting accommodations requests for adults with specific learning disabilities, and
- Returned GEDTS to financial stability...all while moving ahead with the new series of GED Tests.

When we take a look at where we've been and where we need to go, the landmarks quickly come into view:

Evolution of the Tests: Where We've Been

Throughout their 55-year history, the GED Tests have assessed skills required for both academia and work. Our continuing challenge at GEDTS is to develop an assessment instrument that provides a valid and reliable basis for awarding a high school level diploma. The GED diploma must have value both for the individual and for the organizations he or she seeks to join, whether they be colleges or corporations, trade schools or trade unions.

As society's needs in these areas change, the GED testing program's validity and credibility depend on periodic reviews of the GED's goals and specifications. That there have been just three generations of tests since 1942 demonstrates the strength of the test specification and standard-setting process. The content areas of English Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, and Mathematics have remained constant over the last half-century, but the constructs by which individuals are assessed have evolved.

1942 Series: The first generation of tests, developed in 1942, reflected an industrial era, when a high school education was sufficient for many jobs. By the time this series was retired in 1977, over 40% of the test takers took the tests for employment reasons—evidence that this level of education qualified people for many entry-level positions. During this period, 37% indicated plans for further study. Content knowledge was assessed in a traditional manner. The English test focused on the correctness and effectiveness of expression, while success in social studies, science, and literature depended on interpreting reading material.

1978 Series: By the mid-70s, the closing cusp of the industrial age, changes in secondary curricula and public attitudes toward education made necessary a review of the GED

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WINNER
APEX'98
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Australian-born Woman Earns GED, Bachelor's Degree During 20+ Years of Travel

"Remember the one about the hare and the tortoise? Well, another tortoise just crossed the finish line." I wrote those words on the graduation party invitations I sent out in May of this year.

by Margaret H. Bender

At fifty-two, I finally have my B.A., the goal of an academic journey that began in 1972 when I took the GED. It was not really so much that I was slow, but that the road had many detours.

I was born and raised in Australia, where I finished high school in 1962. High school diplomas there are awarded on the basis of statewide examinations taken at the end of the senior year, not on credits accumulated throughout the year.

At sixteen, I was an unfocused and unmotivated student. Although I earned As in English, French, and Latin, I failed Math, History, and Biology, and therefore did not qualify for the Leaving Certificate, as the diploma was then called. My parents could not persuade me to repeat the year. Instead I enrolled in a secretarial course, and then went to work.

I lived at home, and by 1966 I had saved the fare to England. I worked in London and traveled in Europe, then applied for a job at the World Bank in Washington, DC. I arrived in the United States in the fall of 1967. Two months later, I met my future husband, John. We were married in 1969, and after he finished his military service, including a tour in Vietnam, we moved to Boston where he was to attend graduate school. It was now 1971 and our daughter, Heather, was six months old. In the academic community of which we became a part, all of our friends had college degrees. Being "uneducated" began to have an effect on the way I viewed myself.

No matter how often John told me that I was just as smart as anyone he knew, the fact was, I had none of those academic papers that signify achievement and are the keys to fulfilling work and security. So, I made the necessary application and took the GED at a nearby testing center in May of 1972. The day my scores arrived (a 70 average!), I was as excited as if I had earned a Ph.D.

My goal was college, but at that time it was not feasible. We were living on GI Bill education benefits, plus what I earned typing students' papers, and struggling to pay John's tuition. I put my GED certificate away in a drawer and waited.

For GED graduate Margaret Bender, the winding path of her life has exposed her to many cultures and ideas.

In 1974 we went to Trinidad and Tobago for John's doctoral field research. I took the SATs at a high school in Port of Spain. A year later we moved to Miami where John had a teaching position. Our second daughter, Alexandra, was born there and I took the SAT achievements in English and French, and the CLEP general exams. John then joined the Foreign Service and we returned to Washington. I took my first college class at the northern Virginia campus of the University of Virginia in 1977. It would be five years before I took another.

For the next eight years we lived overseas: four years in New Delhi, India, one year in Frankfurt, Germany, three years in Tel Aviv, Israel. We came home to Virginia for three years and left again: a year and a half in Colombo, Sri Lanka; three and a half years in Vienna,

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GED Items

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Volume 15, Number 6 AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION November/December 1998

GED's Highest Honor Goes to Program Leader

The recipient of the 1998 Cornelius P. Turner award is Emma E. Rhodes, Ed.D. Dr. Rhodes retired in February from her post as GED Administrator for the state of Arkansas. Unlike many professionals, Rhodes went right back to work—in a laundromat.

Rhodes retired after her son asked her to help him finance a business. She says that she was called by God to work alongside her son not simply to ensure success, but rather to serve the community where the laundromat would be located. She now spends many of her days in a "difficult" neighborhood in Little Rock, Arkansas. She notes that when the laundromat first opened, locals appeared puzzled and distrustful of the tidy, cheerful premises. In addition to the expected washers and dryers, there is the unexpected: the proprietors have placed inspirational messages along the walls and provided reading and play areas for their customers.

The Turner Award recipient adds that she sees more than most would care to see. "It's a rough area," says Rhodes. "Drugs, boarded-up stores, garbage, graffiti. Many of the customers are young women with children. I am there to tell them that there is another way—although some aren't ready to listen."

Turner Award winner Emma Rhodes (center) displays her award, flanked by GED Testing Service Executive Director Joan Auchter and Director of Partner Outreach Fred Edwards.

In presenting the Turner Award at the GED Administrators' Conference in July, GED Testing Service Executive Director Joan Auchter told the audience about one of the special qualities Rhodes possesses that made her uniquely qualified for a leadership role in the GED program. "Having left school at age 15, Emma brought to her work not only the experience and understanding of a skilled adult educator, but also the invaluable perspective of an adult learner and a GED graduate."

When she returned to school to study for her GED diploma, young Emma was a 24-year-old mother of five. Five years and two more children later, her husband died, leaving her to support the family. She worked and attended college, earning her doctorate in 1987. Over the years, Rhodes has logged numberless hours speaking to potential students and policymakers alike about the benefits of the GED program. In 1995, she was named one of Arkansas' "Top 100 Women." In addition to her work as GED Administrator, she has hosted programs for KET and served in special capacities—most recently as a member of the GED Test Security Panel.

When the laundromat's customers are ready to listen, Rhodes is ready, too...with whatever assistance they are ready to receive: referrals to adult education and GED preparation, family literacy, and job training programs...and with her own special brand of faith and encouragement born of personal experience and a deep sense of purpose.

For information on Turner Award nomination criteria, turn to page 11.

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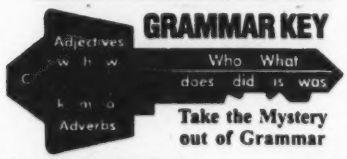

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Winds of Change from page 2

test specifications. As a result, a second generation of tests was introduced in 1978.

The 1978-series tests were characterized by a 1) shift in emphasis from science and social studies reading materials to a separate reading test, accompanied by 2) a transition away from recall of facts toward application of conceptual knowledge and evaluation of presented information. These tests retained an emphasis on high school outcomes, but introduced real-life contexts (such as work or home settings) and reading materials (schedules, newspaper articles) relevant to adults.

The GED testing program's validity and credibility depend on periodic reviews of the GED's goals and specifications.

1988 Series: With the release of John Naisbitt's *Megatrends* in 1982 came a heightened awareness of the shift from an industrial to an information society—one characterized by a commonplace use of technology, global awareness, and participatory democracy. As these changes affect adults, GEDTS initiated a five-year review, drawing on professionals from all sectors of adult education.

Again affirming the GED Tests' academic content areas, the panel recommended five changes: 1) a direct writing sample (essay); 2) an increased emphasis on critical thinking and problem-solving skills; 3) an increased reflection of the diverse roles adults play in society; 4) a greater emphasis on understanding the sources of societal change; and 5) an increase in contextual settings relevant to adults.

In addition to the changes in the tests, there was also a shift in candidates' reasons for taking the tests. Today, over 65 percent of candidates say they are taking the tests for entry into postsecondary education, while 30 percent report taking the tests for employment reasons.

2001 Series: Where we Need to Go

Hurricanes of change are sweeping education and the workplace. Content standards developed at the national and jurisdiction level form the basis for the changes that will most likely be part of the next series of GED Tests. These changes were proposed by a panel of experts representing the core academic disciplines of English Language Arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

In keeping with the focus on adults who use the GED diploma to access both the workplace and postsecondary education in an information-based society, the panel recommended four enhancements, which are described in the box on page 14.

During 1999, we plan to complete these steps:

- Confirm test specifications based on solid, measurable standards
- Define the sample design for use with the norm group of graduating high school seniors
- Research item types to confirm that it is possible to introduce the cross-disciplinary test, the dimensional testing and report of skills, and machine-scorable alternate format responses
- Develop and field test items in the areas that don't require special research
- Move forward with remainder of test development as research is completed.

In 2000, we must establish:

- Passing standard—We may or may not use the current "cut point" [66%] or score scale, but we must place the standard so that GED diploma holders

continued on page 14

New Section 10, Appendix G to Debut This Fall

Many conscientious GED Examiners have contacted the GED Testing Service to inquire about the status of the new Section 10 and corresponding Appendix G to the 1997 *GED Examiner's Manual*. These materials are now in production and scheduled for distribution to each testing center in late 1998.

Section 10 will contain key facts about the program and serve as "self-guided tour" that Chief and Alternate Chief Examiners can use to familiarize themselves with the key elements of their duties and the contents of the *Examiner's Manual*. For example, if you have ever wondered about the reasons for signing the Test Security Memorandum each year or what sort of financial aid is available to GED graduates who want to attend college, this new section will help you find the answers. According to GEDTS Partner Outreach Manager Patricia Jones, these materials will "provide Examiners with a road map to the program so that they can really benefit from the training offered by their GED Administrator." Used in conjunction with the supporting materials in Appendix G, many of the materials can also be used in group activities. Thus, Chief Examiners will also have at their disposal ready-made activities to use as part of inservice training at their own Official GED Testing Center.

In addition to the revamped staff inservice training materials in Section 10 and Appendix G that will form the "backbone" of the update, GED Examiners will find an updated Section 7 that is more straightforward and user-friendly. The revised Section 7 will also serve as the foundation piece for a set of long-awaited publications covering GEDTS' model process for providing test accommodations for adults with specific learning disabilities. These materials are expected to be ready for distribution in early 1999.

The *Examiner's Manual* update will also contain some new operations practices in Section 4. Watch this space! The upcoming November/December issue of *GED Items* will provide a more detailed view of what GED Examiners may expect from the update packet.

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Who Took GED? from page 1

"We expect to find increased numbers of people taking the tests in 1998 and anticipate that the passing rate will improve as the higher standard is reflected in preparation courses and materials for the GED Tests," Auchter added.

Who Took the GED? found that 65.4 percent of adults taking the tests planned to use the GED diploma to pursue postsecondary training and education, compared with 37.8 percent 20 years ago. About 27 percent of 1997 test takers reported taking the tests for employment reasons; during the 1970s that number was about 40 percent.

"These shifts may reflect the changing nature of work in a post-industrial society. In today's world, education is a key to performance," said ACE President Stanley O. Ikenberry. "GED candidates seem to be aware that economic success is strongly linked to postsecondary education and training. More than 820,000 adults took the initiative in 1997 to attempt to earn a GED high school-level diploma, which would empower them to move their lives forward and achieve self-set goals."

More than 90 percent of colleges and universities in the United States have policies to accept nontraditional graduates including GED diploma holders. While not specifically designed to test workplace readiness, the tests have been demonstrated to measure nearly all the basic skills that employers value as documented by the U.S. Department of Labor. "It is important," added Ikenberry, "that citizens have an opportunity to re-enter the educational pipeline by studying for, taking, and passing the Tests of General Educational Development."

Jurisdiction-level Data:

Even with the raised standard, six jurisdictions reported increases from 1996 in the numbers of persons meeting score requirements: Alabama (3.2 percent), Arizona (8.7), Connecticut (3.2), Kansas (2), Vermont (1.6), and Guam (5.8).

Six jurisdictions where the standard was raised in 1997 reported a passing rate decrease greater than five percent from 1996: Mississippi (-9.7 percent), New Mexico (-8.8), South Carolina (-7.9), Texas (-10.9), Virginia (-9.3), and American Samoa (-26.1).

Of those jurisdictions in compliance with the higher standard before 1997, six reported a decrease of greater than five percent from the 1996 rate: Florida (-6.3 percent), New York (-6.4), North Dakota (-7.8), Wisconsin (-6.7), Micronesia (-9.2), and Newfoundland (-10.5).

Age, Formal Schooling, and Military Testing

Almost four in five credentials (79 percent) issued in 1997 were earned by adults under age 30; two in three (68 percent) had completed grade 10 or higher before leaving formal schooling. More than 5,000 active-duty personnel completed the GED Tests in 1997—35 percent more than in 1996.

Special Editions and Testing Accommodations

The total number of special accommodations to standard testing conditions was 7,131 in 1997, an increase of 28 percent over 1996. Ohio tripled and Virginia more than doubled the number of requests for Specific Learning Disability accommodations from 1996 to 1997.

The GED Tests are sponsored by the American Council on Education (ACE), the umbrella association for U.S. colleges and universities. ACE members include nearly 1,600 accredited, degree-granting institutions from all sectors of higher education and about 200 education related organizations.

Who Took the GED? is available for $20 plus $5 for shipping and handling from the GED Fulfillment Service, P.O. Box 261, Annapolis Junction, MD, 20171 (301) 604-9073 (phone) or (301) 604-0158 (fax).

How Do Graduating Seniors Perform?

NEW PASSING STANDARD*

40 and 45 (United States); 45 average (Canada)

All jurisdictions now meet or exceed this level. Approximately two-thirds (66%) of graduating high school seniors (grade 12 in Canada) are capable of meeting this standard.

OLD PASSING STANDARD**

35 and 45 (United States); 40 and 45 (Canada)

Minimum passing score in 29 jurisdictions before 1/1/97. Newfoundland raised its standard to 45 average in 1996.

40 or 45 (United States)

GEDTS minimum standard from 1981 through 1996. Minimum passing score in six U.S. jurisdictions before 1/1/97.

*Some jurisidctions, including NJ and WI, have unique requirements for award of diploma. See Appendix I of the 1997 *GED Examiner's Manual*. **Most common standards prior to 1997.

Recommended Changes to New Test Series Mean End to Combining Scores Across Test Versions

In the past, the GED Testing Service has permitted each jurisdiction to set its own policy concerning combining of scores across "generations" of the tests.

This practice will end with the introduction of the 2001-series GED Tests in September, 2001. Therefore, adults who are working now toward their GED diploma therefore have fewer than three years to earn a diploma based on the current edition of the GED Tests.

Any GED candidate who has not successfully completed the 1988-series battery by the time the new tests are introduced must start again with the 2001-series tests to qualify for a GED credential. The obsolete scores cannot be "converted" to scores on the 2001-series GED Tests.

The new GED Tests will continue to measure the major and lasting outcomes of a four-year high school course of study in English Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, and Mathematics. Graduating high school seniors will continue to set the benchmark by which passing scores are set. The tests will reflect the most up-to-date, widely-used curriculum standards and standardized assessment practices available. However, the structure of the GED Tests will be realigned in a way that no longer corresponds to the five tests found in all preceding test series (also see *GED Items*, January/February, 1998).

At the recommendation of a panel of education professionals, two tests which are now separate—the Interpreting Literature and the Arts Test and the Writing Skills Test—will be incorporated into a single Language Arts Test and a new cross-disciplinary test will be introduced.

The cross-disciplinary test will use real-life stimulus materials that cut across traditional classroom subject areas and require candidates to handle information in multiple disciplines simultaneously.

One example of the type of test materials found on the cross-disciplinary test might be a newspaper article about world-wide health care trends from which the test-taker would be required to answer questions relating to social studies, science, and mathematics.

The obsolete scores cannot be "converted" to scores on the 2001-series GED Tests.

According to GED Testing Service Executive Director Joan Auchter, "These types of test questions not only mirror the tasks students are being asked to perform in the K-12 environment, but also closely match the ways adults must function as effective workers, parents, students, and citizens."

Another feature planned for the 2001-series tests will be a report of skills that are used in nearly all academic and life situations—skills such as critical thinking, communication, and information processing. Performance ratings in these areas will be drawn from across all five tests in the battery, providing a "third dimension" to the scores.

Although earlier tests were carefully constructed from an appropriate combination of test items requiring varying degrees of critical thinking, communication, and information processing skills, tabulated information about skill strengths and weaknesses was not shared with the candidate. This added feature may not affect whether the candidate passes the GED Tests. However, it will equip the GED graduate and others, such as college and employment counselors, with helpful insight into the GED graduate's areas of relative strength. Because the GED Tests have never before been designed to yield this information,

continued on page 14

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Bringing Your Classroom Into the 21st Century

As we approach the new millennium, it becomes clear that the way we teach must change.

by Mark Dubbs

To have a vibrant and exciting classroom, teachers need to implement technoiogy. Not only do parents, students, school administrators, and communities demand it, but to prepare our students for the competitive job market they'll face, we need to model computers being used for more than the playing of games and the typing of reports. Students need exposure to the multiple uses of the computer that an educational setting provides. What is true for the traditional student is equally, if not more true for the adult learner.

"Great idea," you say, "but we don't have computers and there is no money."

Money is tight throughout the country. It's hard to tell a school district to buy computers when it's short on textbooks. For that reason, educators must be creative and aggressive in their pursuit! The following strategies have all been used successfully to acquire computers.

1. Business Partnerships–If stadiums can have corporate sponsorship, why not computer labs?
2. Lobbying for the use of public funds (e.g., municipal or county bond issues)
3. Grants–There is funding available for those who are willing to be competitive!
4. Donations–Computers aren't cheap and quickly become obsolete. However, it's more important for teachers to have access to computers in general rather than state-of-the-art tools. This is a fact you can use to your advantage. Solicit individuals, businesses and government agencies for donations of outdated equipment.

Now, you ask, "What do I really need to access in my classroom?"

For starters, teachers need a computer, a monitor, and a printer. However, the printer doesn't need to be in your room. Also needed is multi-faceted productivity-based software. By this I mean software that can be reused to complete many tasks—word processing, database, spreadsheet, presentation and drawing functions. A CD ROM device and Internet access aren't needed, but both can contribute much.

Computers offer access to a wealth of information that can help expand discussions and provide background facts at a relatively low cost.

"All right, so once I get it, what do I do with it?"

One of the biggest problems educators encounter with technology is getting over the fear of learning to use something new. Here are a few thoughts to keep in mind:

1. Don't let a lack of technical knowledge intimidate you. Learning styles vary. Whether you're the type to read manuals cover-to-cover, or one who gets off to a quick start, referring to the manual when you're stumped, just dive in give it a try.
2. Start small. You don't need to know every nuance of every software package to teach a quality lesson. Instead of feeling the pressure to learn many software packages, start out by mastering just one.
3. Ask for help. Find someone who knows the software, even if that means learning from a student. Being a teacher doesn't mean you have to have all the answers!

Computers can make learning fun. As educators, we compete with entertainment—video games, MTV and web surfing. Computers give teachers the opportunity to integrate a variety of entertaining activities into colorful and interesting ways of learning. They are great for keeping visual learners engaged.

"How can the computer be used in class?" "What software should we purchase?"

I said earlier that schools need multi-faceted, productivity based software—software that allows students and teachers alike the opportunity to develop an end product—a poster, a slide show, an outline, an essay. While commercially-produced educational games have their place, "canned" programs don't provide teachers much flexibility to adapt the program to their teaching needs.

Software such as that used in everyday adult settings—spreadsheets, presentation software, word processing programs—can't be "outgrown." Both teacher and student will always find new ways to use such tools. These ways include the following:

1. Classroom Management: Teachers can use the computer to complete a variety of classroom tasks. Grade programs, attendance monitors, student database information, assignment calendars and course syllabi can all be created using software such as ClarisWorks, Microsoft Works and Microsoft Office.
2. Lesson Outliner and Discussion Initiator: Providing lesson outlines, background information and discussion questions is easy with presentation software. Teachers can replace the overhead projector using presentation software like Microsoft PowerPoint which allows you to integrate pictures, graphs, and sounds into the lesson. Another excellent program is Inspiration—a computer-generated graphic organizer that allows users to diagram webs, brainstorm, and sequence tasks or ideas.
3. Curriculum Enhancement: Computers offer access to a wealth of information that can help expand discussions and provide background facts at a relatively low cost. Both Internet-based and CD ROM reference sources broaden the knowledge base that teachers have available to them. Integrated into a computer presentation, these products can be shared with students.
4. Assessment Facilitator: Teachers can develop unassisted review and remediation programs with programs like Hyperstudio.

"What is better, a lab setting or the one-computer classroom?"

When educators have several computers, they must determine whether students would benefit more from computers being grouped together in a lab setting or split out into individual classrooms. Both options have positive and negative aspects. The main difference is that the lab setting provides for independent student-based projects. For a lab setting to work, however, instructors need to be extremely comfortable with the assignment, know how to "troubleshoot" computer errors, anticipate student difficulties, and be prepared with a back-up lesson if the lab computers go "down."

Don't let a lack of technical knowledge intimidate you.

If the computers are arranged so that one computer serves one classroom, the computer must be attached to a display device large that allows all students to see the information, and certainly not isolated in the back of the room or on the instructor's desk.

In the one-computer classroom, students benefit from seeing information presented in a variety of ways. Teachers benefit from modeling computer use to students while at the same time increasing their own comfort level.

Regardless of the method of implementation, however, remember that computers cannot teach the class for you. They are a tool that you can use to bring variety and excitement to the classroom.

Mark Dubbs teaches World History at River Hill High School, in Howard Co., MD. For more information, e-mail mdubbs@mail.howard.k12.md.us

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Key Positions at GEDTS Filled; More Staffing Searches Under Way

New Test Development Director Debuts at Annual Conference

Lyn Schaefer joined the GED Testing Service staff on July 21, 1998, as the Director of Test Development. For the past fifteen years, Lyn has developed tests for the Florida statewide assessment program and for several professional certification boards primarily contracted to ACT. Her experience includes developing and administering paper-and-pencil tests as well as computer-based tests and performance assessments.

"Lyn is a tremendous addition to the GED family," said GEDTS Executive Director **Joan Auchter**. "Her background means we have a broader expertise among our staff."

Assisting Lyn will be **Debra Louallen-Cole** in her new capacity Test Development Manager. Debra has extensive experience managing data collection and analysis activities for test standardization and norming. For the past 10 years, Debra has assisted with and eventually managed production of *Who Took the GED?*, the GED program's annual statistical report.

New and Old Faces Take Their Places in GED Lineup

This spring, the GED Testing Service has added three important staff members in key positions.

Veteran GED program partners will be pleased to learn that **Cheryl Roberts** and **Patricia Jones** have both returned to GEDTS in new capacities. As Client Services Coordinator, Cheryl is responsible for answering general inquiries and routing complicated requests to the appropriate staff members. When callers reach the main telephone number, it will most likely be Cheryl's voice they hear. Cheryl started her career with ACE in 1985 as receptionist for the Center for Adult Learning and Educational Credentials. In 1993, Cheryl began her work as a Data Services Technician with GEDTS.

As GEDTS' Partner Outreach Manager, Patricia Jones will be working with **Fred Edwards** to serve the GED Administrators and Examiners, and to develop and sponsor training workshops. When Fred is on the road, Patricia will be available to trouble-shoot and provide program guidance. Patricia previously worked with GEDTS Data Services managing the GED score database and scoring processes for federal and private contracts. These changes mean that **Cathy Allin** has transitioned into a new position. As Operations Coordinator, Cathy retains some of her current duties while implementing improved systems for communicating with the field, and for monitoring GED staff activities.

Marie Woods joined GEDTS as Test Production Manager on June 8. Marie brings strong hands-on and management experience in print production. Formerly Corporate Advertising Manager for the Dart Group, a major retail conglomerate, Marie has assumed **Suzette Stone Busa**'s previous position supervising the assembly, production, proofing, and printing of the GED Tests. Suzette in March was promoted Director of Program Operations, where she now also oversees test distribution.

Next on the List

Staffing searches are currently under way for a Director of Special Projects, a Field Service Manager, a Psychometrician, and a Mathematics Test Specialist. For information, contact ACE Human Resources at (202) 939-9424.

Disabilities Advocate Bill Langner Dies

William R. Langner, a long-time advocate for adults with disabilities, died June 19 at his home in Washington, DC. Langner served in the U.S. Department of Education's Division of Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL) for nearly 20 years. Co-founder of the National Association for Adults with Special Learning Needs (NAASLN) and a founding member of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE), Langner was a delegate to the World Assembly of Adult Education and had also served on the GED Advisory Committee.

Before joining DAEL, Langner directed a learning center in Richmond, VA. His first exposure in Washington came when he was appointed by President Lyndon B. Johnson to the National Advisory Council on Adult Education.

"Bill left adult education an important legacy," said GED Testing Service Program Outreach Director Fred Edwards. "He helped many in our industry to understand how systems marginalize people with special needs, and that awareness is only the first step toward meaningful change."

Ronald S. Pugsley, DAEL Director told the adult education community in his weekly e-mail newsletter, "Bill's courageous spirit and energy as an advocate for disabled learners was an inspiration to all of us who work with adult education. We will miss him."

The new GED Testing Service videotape for persons undergoing certification training for evaluating special testing applications is dedicated in memory of Bill Langner.

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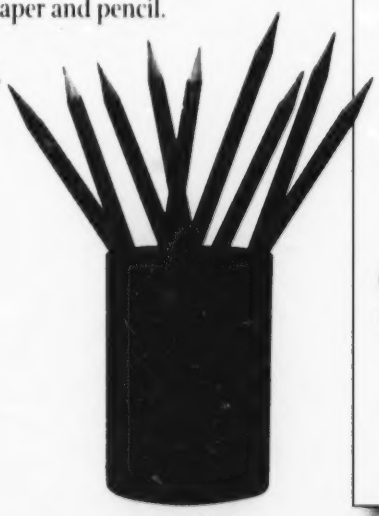

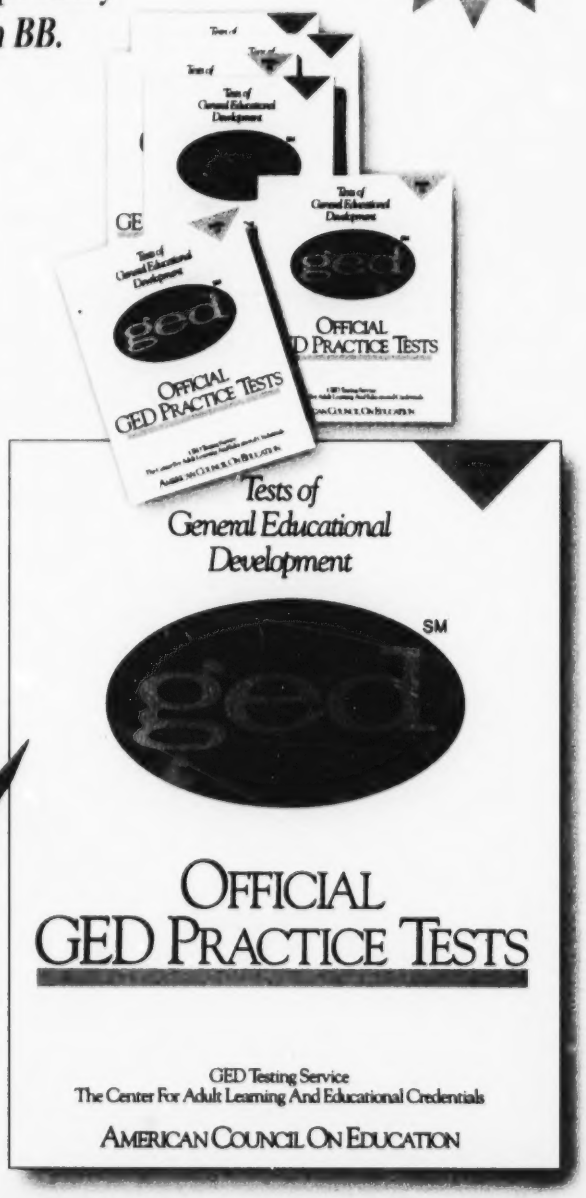

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GED Honor Roll Achievers Outperform 85 Percent of Norm Group; Three Score Over 390

Each year, the GED Testing Service joins states, provinces, and territories in recognizing the GED graduate(s) who earn the highest score in their respective jurisdiction. Although two United States jurisdictions have more stringent requirements, the minimum passing score is 40 on each test, accompanied by an average standard score of 45. In Canada, the minimum passing score is 45 on each test. These levels of performance can be met by approximately 66 percent of graduating twelfth-graders in each country. Scores on each test range from 20 to 80, making the highest possible total score 400. Approximately 15 percent of graduating U.S. high school seniors achieve total scores of 300 or better; less then two percent earn a total score of 375 or better.

"Honor Roll" Snapshots

James Sharp (CA) is an 18-year-old junior college student recovering from a teenage substance abuse problem which cut short his formal schooling. He writes, "Both this award and my newly repaired relationship with my family has given me a new hope for a better future." James earned a 393 on the GED Tests and is considering a major in history or psychology.

Deborah Sills (MT) is a 31-year-old single mother. She recently determined that it was time to complete high school and go on with her education. Deborah earned a total score of 391 on her first attempt at the GED Tests and is now enrolled at Montana State University where she studies engineering and maintains a grade point average of 4.0. A third GED graduate, 19-year-old Wesley Winship (MN) also scored a 391 total on the GED Tests.

The highest scoring graduate reported for Canada, Scott Patterson, age 32 from Saskatchewan (SK), earned a total standard score of 385 on the Canadian English-language edition of the tests.

Award Recipients

Wilhelmina M. Archie, Guam; Raymond Bernard, Nouveau Brunswick; Timothy L. Boutilier, Nova Scotia; Daniel J. Bronson, Nebraska; Michael P. Bustamente, New Mexico; David Cardon, Nevada; Elena Isabel Chavira, Kansas; Timothy S. Conley, Kentucky; Angela Davis-Smith, Washington, DC; Matthew J. DiSpirito, Rhode Island; Emily J. Duncan, Ontario; Julia W. Duncan, Kansas; Elizabeth M. Ferguson, Wyoming; Leonard C. Fortney, Oklahoma; Gemery J. Gomes, Vermont; Justin A. Haba, Alberta; John Hancorn, British Columbia; Heather C. Heckel, New Mexico; Arthur W. Hendley, Georgia; Michael J. Hoffer, Florida; Amiram S. James, Washington, DC; Ryan C. Jones, Michigan; Colin D. Leipelt, South Carolina; Travis Miller, Ohio; Jennifer G. Northam, Alabama; Philip Nungaq, Northwest Territories; Robert C. O'Brien, Idaho; Scott Patterson, Saskatchewan; James Phillips, Prince Edward Island; Wolff K. Podgwaite, Connecticut; Damien L. Rockwell, Maryland; James R. Rust, Virginia; James M. Sharp, California; John M. Siemer, Washington; Deborah Sills, Montana; Charles M. Smith, III, West Virginia; Logan P. Stewart, North Dakota; William Taylor, New Brunswick; Krystal Todman, U.S. Virgin Islands; Erin J. Tripp, Massachusetts; Lance H. Vandervelde, Guam; Jameson Whitney, Maine; Richard H. Williams, Tennessee; Philip D. Wilson, Missouri; Wesley L. Winship, Minnesota.

Several jurisdictions have not yet reported their award recipient for 1997 and some jurisdictions do not participate in this award program. Contact your jurisdiction's GED office for information.

Eligibility Requirements for the Outstanding Achievement Award

To be eligible for the GED Outstanding Achievement Award, a GED graduate must: (1) take the GED Tests between January 1 and December 31 of the calendar year; (2) achieve a total GED standard score of 300 or above; (3) earn his or her award-winning score the first time he or she takes the GED Tests; and (4) be at least age 18 or older when he or she takes the GED Tests. In addition, the GED graduate (5) cannot have been enrolled in any for-credit postsecondary-level courses before or during the time when he or she took the GED Tests. Such coursework does not include GED preparation courses, continuing education courses, and non-credit courses offered in a college setting.

If you believe you know a GED candidate who is eligible for the GED Outstanding Achievement Award, contact the GED Administrator for your state, province or territory.

Chicago Conference Addresses Plans for Improved Service, Data Collection, Testing Accommodations

More than 100 state, provincial, and territorial GED Administrators and other adult education professionals gathered at the Ambassador West hotel in Chicago July 28–August 1 for the annual GED Administrators' Conference.

During the meeting GED Administrators, who oversee testing operations in the U.S., Canada, and their territories, reviewed statistical outcomes from first full year of higher passing standards, examined test content and standards for the 2001-series GED tests, and refined plans for a field service component to the GED program.

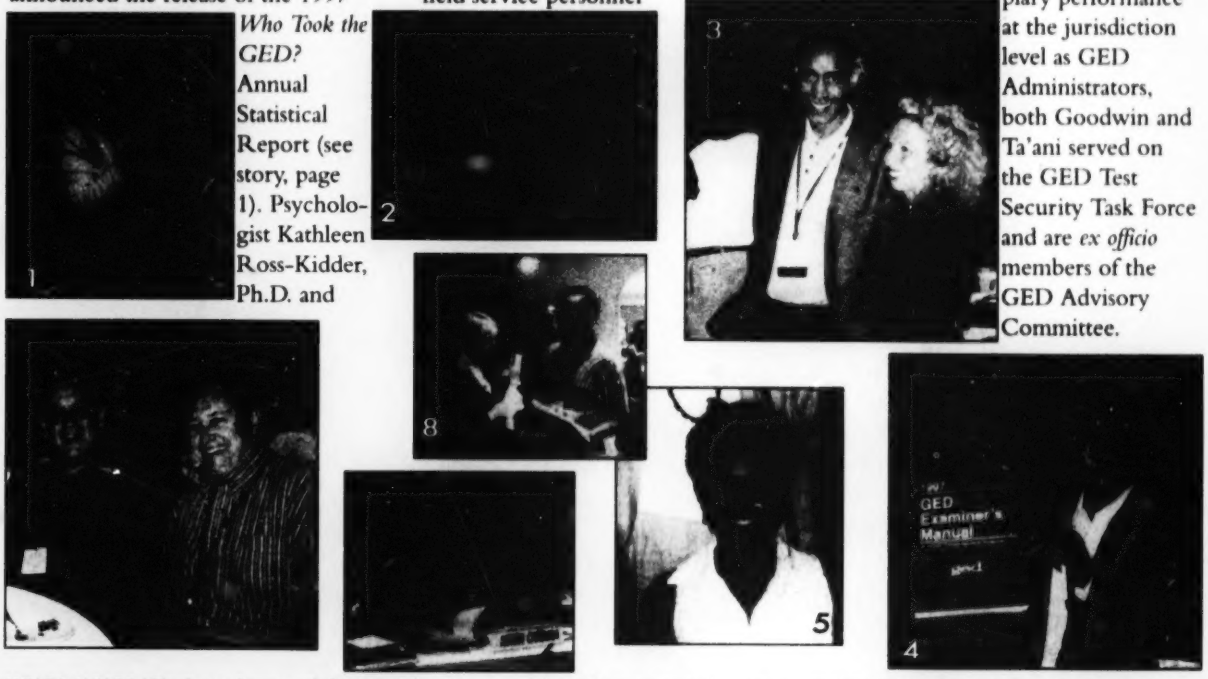
Featured speakers included ACE President Stanley O. Ikenberry, who announced the release of the 1997 *Who Took the GED?* Annual Statistical Report (see story, page 1). Psychologist Kathleen Ross-Kidder, Ph.D. and adult education expert Neil Sturomsky unveiled a national model process for granting test accommodations to adults with specific learning disabilities.

A new feature of this year's conference was a pre-conference "refresher course" in which GED Administrators reviewed the essential elements of the complex partnership that keeps the GED program running. Testing center operation was also reflected in a conference presentation by Arlington, VA, GED Examiners Raul Matos and Marrio Walker and Mathew Adigun of the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education.

Regional break-out sessions on key issues such as the plans for new field service personnel and a centralized data collection system offered GED Administrators to continue the dialogue on important topics that began with the 1997 conference in San Antonio.

The conference also served as a backdrop for the presentation of several awards. GEDTS Executive Director Joan Auchter presented the 1998 Cornelius P. Turner Award to Emma E. Rhodes, who also was GED Administrator for Arkansas.

Also presented at the conference was this year's Distinguished Service Award. This year, two recipients were honored for their outstanding performance as GED Administrators: Larry Goodwin of Pennsylvania and Patricia Ta'ani of Virginia. In addition to their exemplary performance at the jurisdiction level as GED Administrators, both Goodwin and Ta'ani served on the GED Test Security Task Force and are *ex officio* members of the GED Advisory Committee.



WHO's WHO? ***(Clockwise from top left; GED Administrators unless otherwise noted.)*** **1: Nancy Hyland (Nova Scotia). 2: Distinguished Service Award winners Larry Goodwin (PA) and Patricia Ta'ani (VA). 3: Fred Edwards and Joan Auchter, GEDTS staff. 4: Matthew Adigun, GED Field Operations (GA). 5: Lolita Reyes (Guam). 6: Dee Boyer (NC) and Dave Massey (ND). 7: Jack Miles, GED Program Specialist (TX) and Harlan Stubbs, Jr. (KY). 8: Kathleen Ross-Kidder, psychologist, and David Fischer (OH).**

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Winds of Change from page 4

can be assured of having a solid grasp of the skills they need to get where they want to go.

- Standardization—While we can use a range of sample designs for varying purposes, the standardization of the 2001-series tests will require a national sample of graduating high school seniors to set the minimum passing standard.
- Practice Test Availability—New practice tests will be in the field one year before the introduction of the new tests. To support this goal, GEDTS will put out a request for proposals to publishers during the spring of 1999.

Our ship is seaworthy; our destination is clear and our course is charted. While we may need our foul-weather gear from time to time along the journey, I assure you that we will report back to shore regularly through *GED Items*, on our web site (http://www.acenet.edu/programs/CALEC/GED/home.html), and in person so that you have current knowledge of where we are on the voyage to 2001.

Joan Auchter is Executive Director of the GED Testing Service.

Recommended Features of "GED 2001"

Assessment and Reporting of Skills

The new tests will facilitate the assessment and reporting of skills such as communication, critical thinking, and information processing. Construction and coding of item types and responses make it possible to draw performance ratings for the examinee from across all five tests in the battery when the answer sheet is scanned. These ratings will not become part of the passing score requirement. However, by reporting skill competencies on the score report, the GED program can better facilitate the GED graduate's transition to appropriate workplace and postsecondary opportunities.

New Cross-Disciplinary Test

A separate test that draws on all core disciplines will be included in the 2001 test battery. Item stimulus materials in this test will not be edited to focus solely on a single content area. Rather, items on this test will use authentic stimuli which will allow GED candidates to apply their knowledge, critical thinking, and information processing skills in multiple disciplines simultaneously.

Calculator On The Mathematics Test

The new tests will introduce the use of the calculator, an addition which was recommended for the 1988-series tests. However, because the test specifications committee concluded that it is critical for GED graduates to demonstrate estimation and "mental math" skills, calculator use will be prohibited for 20% of the Mathematics Test. The remainder of the test will include authentic charts and numbers for data analysis and statistics. We've had many suggestions for the type of calculator and how to best package the calculator with the test; and will announce these specifications in the coming months.

Alternate Item Response Formats

The 2001-series tests will also include a limited number of constructed response formats that can be machine- or objectively scored. These formats replace the familiar multiple-choice selections with items that can be gridded on a machine-scorable answer sheet. Such restrictions on new item response types will preclude added time and expense. In responding to such a test item, for example, a test taker might be asked to graph the slope of a line or "bubble in" a numerical response.

For more about how changes will affect program operations, see page 7.

Combining Scores from page 7

scores from previous series won't be compatible with scores from the 2001-series tests.

Graduating high school seniors will continue to set the benchmark by which passing scores are set...however, the structure of the GED Tests will be realigned.

"Nearly 60 years ago," says Auchter, "the GED Tests created a revolution by making it possible for people who had gained high school knowledge outside of the traditional classroom to document their ability. We've entered an age where the ability to find and use information is becoming more important than the ability to merely recite it. These changes will ensure the GED Tests' continued value to the individual and to educational, business, and trade organizations as an authoritative measure of high school-level skills and knowledge."

As these changes can be expected to affect test administration practices on many levels, the GED Testing Service is working now with adult education policymakers in each state, province, and territory to determine the needed practices and begin their implementation. Additional information about policy and procedural changes, such as specifications for the type of calculator to be used and the length of time candidates may take to complete the tests, will be forthcoming over the months and years ahead.

For news about the new tests, see the GED website at: http://www.acenet.edu/programs/CALEC/GED/home.html. Click on "What's New."

MA to Pilot Adult Ed Teacher Competency Certificates

The Massachusetts Department of Education, in collaboration with the State System for Adult Basic Education Support, will pilot two certificates of competency for ABE teachers this fall. The certificates are in Teaching Reading to Adults and in Adult Learning Theory and Adult Development. The certificate projects are designed to help the state define foundation skills needed by ABE teachers and move toward a comprehensive system to certify adult basic education practitioners.

Benchmarking Quality Takes Investment

Oregon recently booted up its Tracking of Programs and Students (TOPS) system, an automated, individual student accountability system for all students in all programs. The software, developed in collaboration with other states and workforce partner agencies, will support the matching of basic skills data with workforce, education, and welfare data systems.

The state is using adult education grant money to buy hardware, and to hire and train staff, with plans for the system to be fully implemented in 1999.

National Reporting System Pilot States Selected

Pilot tests for the U.S. adult education national reporting system are slated for nine states this fall. The U.S. Department of Education will conduct the trial runs with local programs in Alabama, Arizona, California, Iowa, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Wyoming.

The pilot will assess new educational functioning level definitions, and test benchmarks and follow-up procedures.

ERIC/ACVE Serves Adult Learning Community

The ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education (ERIC/ACVE) is located at the Center on Adult and Training for Employment (CETE), part of Ohio State University's College of Education. ERIC/ACVE works to facilitate the career and occupational preparation and advancement of youths and adults by providing comprehensive information services on adult and continuing education, career and vocational/technical education. Educators can access the ERIC database and read or download full-text documents through the Internet from one of many specialized ERIC clearinghouses or simply ask a question. For more information, contact the ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education, The Center on Education and Training for Employment, 1900 Kenny Rd. Columbus, OH 43210, (800) 848-4815. http:// ericacve.org ...or search by topic at: http://search.ed.gov/csi/eric.html.

Welfare Reform's First-Round Grants Released

President Clinton in late May announced the first $186 million in competitive grant awards from the $3 billion Welfare-to-Work program. The Department of Labor grants will support 49 programs designed to help long-term welfare recipients transition into lasting, unsubsidized jobs. An additional $525 million in competitive grants will be awarded before the end of FY 1999. The remainder of the $3 billion will be distributed to states on a formula basis.

Most (about 70 percent) of the competitive funds are earmarked for poor urban areas, the remainder is intended for rural projects. For news on eligibility and selection criteria, go to http://www.doleta.gov.

Museum Offers Rock-Based Interdisciplinary Course

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland, OH, hosts an annual summer institute for secondary music, social studies and English teachers. The week-long course traces how rock music developed from the blending of Anglo- and African-American musical traditions and offers expert presentations in Music, English, Sociology, Journalism, Law and African American Studies, as well as hands-on sessions in various disciplines. Extensive teaching materials accompany the program. Graduate credit and CEUs are offered and low-cost housing is available. For information, call (216) 515-1234.

GED Practice Material Reaches New Venues

In addition to new half-length self-scoring and full length versions of the Official GED Practice Tests from Steck-Vaughn, the Official GED Practice Tests are now available on CD-ROM from Contemporary Books. The computerized version allow instructors to track individual student performance.

More practice questions from the GED "item bank" also will be available online soon at the Literacy Link website, http://www.pbs.org/learn/literacy.

Destiny is not a matter of chance, but a matter of choice.

–Petrena Trice
GED Instructor, Miami, FL

Australian "tortoise" from page 3

Austria; and a year in Seoul, South Korea. I directed my energy towards moving, creating a home life in foreign places, and raising our girls.

When we were in Virginia, I took classes part-time at Northern Virginia Community College. In Frankfurt, Vienna, and Seoul, I attended the University of Maryland University College (UMUC). In Europe and Asia, UMUC programs are conducted in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Defense for servicemembers and their dependents. Members of the Foreign Service are also eligible to participate. I can't say enough good things about UMUC; without it I would not have my degree. When we returned from Seoul and moved back into our house in Virginia, I set about finishing up the remaining credits at the UMUC campus at College Park, Maryland. It took me two years. I graduated *magna cum laude* with a major in English and a minor in history.

While such a meandering course of study is not what I would recommend to everyone, it did have advantages. Among other things, I studied European history and German language in Germany and Austria; art and music in Vienna; and Asian history and Confucianism in Seoul. I learned a few related things along the way:

- Everything we do in life teaches us something.
- People mature and are receptive to learning at different states of their lives. Examinations that measure experiential learning, such as the GED and the CLEP, are invaluable to those of us who need to catch up.
- Education is truly life-long, and reading is the most important factor.

My daughters have proceeded with their education on a more "normal" timetable. Heather has a master's degree and Alexandra is halfway through her graduate program. They have encouraged me in my studies, but they have seen how much harder it is to study later in life when family and other responsibilities take precedence.

My goal was college…I put my GED certificate away in a drawer and waited.

You could ask, "what good is a B.A. in English to a 52-year-old woman?" I would answer that, apart from the knowledge I gained from the course content, which is considerable and wide-ranging, it has given me a sense of accomplishment. It has also given me the confidence to move in new directions, while many of my peers are talking about retiring. I have started working as a writer and editor, and will continue to look for other interesting projects. Even at my age, graduation can be a beginning, not an end.

Margaret H. Bender is a writer and editor living in McLean, VA.

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From the Director

Service Linkages in Adult Education Create "Village" Synergy

by Joan Auchter

As you may imagine, I spend much of my time on the road representing the GED Testing Service at conferences and meetings around the United States and Canada. Some of the meetings center around themes of standardized testing and public policy. At others, I work with GED Examiners and local partners on central GED issues. But many times I have the special opportunity to meet and talk with the adults our programs serve.

Listing all that I have learned in my years of representing GED is impossible. However, over the past year, I've reached a major conclusion: it truly does take a village. In all sectors of our service continuum, from family literacy to adult secondary education, we have long used the term, "adult education community." With the help of First Lady Hilary Rodham Clinton, the old African adage "It takes a village to raise a child" has found a place in American popular culture. A particular experience last spring had the power to bring me to the realization that this village concept isn't just about children. It's about each of us. It's about you, and me, and the adults with whom we work. Adults like Raynice Brumfield.

All this started as I sat in the audience of a National Council for Family Literacy conference in Louisville, Kentucky. At an evening event hosted by Sharon Darling and emceed by GED graduate, cookie impresario, and KET series host Wally Amos, we heard from an adult learner who had successfully completed the Toyota Family Learning Tree Family Literacy Program with the District of Columbia Public Schools' Head Start Program—so successfully that the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) staff selected her from about 350 family literacy parents throughout the US to speak at the Louisville conference where I met her. The poised young woman who took the stage radiated a special grace as she told her story:

"I am Raynice Brumfield. I am a 25 year old parent with four children; James 10, Delonte 8, Kiara 5, and Tyrone, age 4. When I was 15 years old I became pregnant with my first child. Between the ages of 15 and 17, I worked at various jobs. I soon found that I could not make enough money to afford food, clothing, baby supplies, and living expenses. At age 17, I became pregnant with my second child. By 19, I enrolled in a public vocational school, but dropped out because the staff was not sensitive to the needs of young mothers. I did not feel safe in that environment." Before long, Raynice was on public assistance and had four small children to feed.

Raynice Brumfield asks her audience to pray for her GED success. She now makes $15.00 per hour.

Many of us have met young women who have backgrounds similar to Raynice's. What is important is that Raynice recognized the need for further education. She went on to say, "I always knew that an education was the only way that my children and I could someday escape the poverty in which we lived. I wanted to provide my children with the opportunities I never had, so I enrolled my two youngest in the Head Start Program at Moten Elementary. It was the Head Start teacher, Mrs. Grace Blackwood, and the team of family service workers in Head Start that immediately began to execute their mission of empowering my family. They told me about Head Start's new Toyota Family Literacy Program. They encouraged me to enroll in the Family Literacy GED Program. With the parenting instruction, instructor Mrs. Irene Ball told me, I could learn positive parenting skills, and have the opportunity to practice my new literacy and parenting skills with my own children right in their early childhood classroom." Raynice made the first connections in her new village.

WINNER
APEX '97
AWARDS FOR PUBLICATION EXCELLENCE

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Managing Editor: Lisa Richards Hone

Lois B. DeFleur, ACE Board Chair; President SUNY, Binghamton; Stanley O. Ikenberry, President, ACE; Joan E. Auchter, Executive Director, GED Testing Service

"You might say we pestered her," chuckles DC Head Start Director Peggy Minnis, "but sometimes you've got to do that. Eventually, she gave in." Once she was in, Raynice was committed, recalls Minnis. "She was so determined. There were lots of setbacks, but she just kept on coming."

"When I entered the program my reading and math levels were at a second grade level...I am proud to tell you that I now read on a 10th grade level and my math skills have increased to a 9th grade level. I received an award from my children's school, which honored me as being 'Most Active Parent in Schoolwide Activities'." Raynice recalled.

While Raynice was working with the Family Literacy Program, halfway across town, the YWCA of the National Capital Area was providing month-long vocational training to prepare women for non-traditional jobs. As she got closer to being ready for the GED Tests, Raynice was accepted into the YMCA's program and completed training which prepared her to begin work as a carpenter, plumber, mason, or electrician. She liked it and did well. And her village expanded.

On the other side of this "village," George Washington University (GWU) needed to hire more women to bring its mammoth campus staff into compliance with federal regulations. GWU heard about the YWCA and D.C.P.S. Head Start Family Literacy Program through Ms. Minnis and set up a partnership to hire women like Raynice for entry-level positions in building trades...once each woman had earned a GED diploma.

Which brings us back to Raynice's speech at the NCFL conference. With the smile that you see in the accompanying photograph, Raynice said, "Upon notification of having passed the GED, I have been

continued on page 4

GED Graduate Story

GED Meant Second Opportunity For Youth To Heal Self, Family

by James Sharp

My name is James Sharp. I am the oldest of three children. Each of us are exceptionally talented in our own way. My parents encouraged each of us to strive for the excellence that we are so capable of. They applauded our accomplishments and helped us through our struggles.

At about the time that I began high school, my greatest struggle began. I had to search to find where I belonged, who I was, and where I was going. I watched myself turn away from the things that I had thought were important to me, such as sports, school, and my family. Instead, I turned to things I thought would help me—drugs and alcohol. This obviously led to problems with my parents, my sisters, and, ultimately, myself.

I recovered from my handicap quicker than others have, but I burned many bridges along the way. The arguing and fighting continued with my parents for a while. Then I decided to make the hardest decision of my life. I chose to leave them. It was the end of my junior year in high school, and I felt I had no choice.

I returned to a continuation school in the fall of 1997 in hopes that I might at least graduate in 1998. From there I transferred to the NOVA GED Program. I dedicated myself and put forth the effort that I had forgotten I was capable of.

After studying at the NOVA program, I took the practice GED tests. I received only average scores. Still, I felt confident in my abilities and surprised not only my teachers but also myself when I passed the official GED Tests with the highest standard score in the State of California [James earned 393 out of a possible total of 400].

Receiving the Outstanding Achievement Award for my performance on the tests is an honor to me and those who have helped me. It has also made me realize that I am capable of things I thought were impossible. Those many bridges I thought were burned have recently been rebuilt. I have just repaired the relationship with my parents, and things couldn't be better between us.

Both this award and my newly repaired relationship with my family have given me new hopes for a better future. I have already enrolled at a nearby junior college and have my eyes set on a major in psychology or possibly history. It's time to see what the future holds for me.

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Online Instruction Module Offers Contact, Guidance at a Distance

by Chris Smith

On a sunny Tuesday morning in early September at the New Brunswick Community College–Saint John, the telephone rang in the college's Department of Distance Education. The caller, a woman from northern Alberta, wanted information about how she could prepare on line for the GED Tests. Her call was not unusual. Since March 1998, students from as far away as California, Texas, Ontario, and Alaska have been taking GED Preparation 1 over the Internet from this college in the province of New Brunswick on Canada's east coast.

Access to GED Preparation training can sometimes be difficult for those in rural or remote areas, those who are employed as shift workers, those with family responsibilities, or others in a variety of situations. The purpose of the Internet delivery of GED Preparation 1 is to provide access to training for all. In addition to instructional web pages, the website has online conferencing and chat features so that students can meet and talk with one another. There are online mini-tests and an "Ask Mr. GED" feature, which allows students to ask any question about the GED anonymously and to receive an answer on the web. There is also a toll-free telephone support line.

GED Preparation 1 is a short course that meets the curriculum standards set forward by the province of New Brunswick. It does not provide academic training, but rather gives students an orientation to the GED Tests and test-taking strategies. After completing the course content, students write the Official GED Practice Tests and return them to the instructor by mail. Once the tests have been scored, the instructor and student consult privately by telephone to develop an individual action plan for success on the GED, which often involves helping students to identify appropriate resources in their own communities.

Enrollments have not been staggering, but they are expected to increase. About 25 people have registered to date. However, the purpose of this course is not to draw students away from traditional classes that provide personal support that is so often needed. Rather, the purpose is to offer a service to those who are reluctant or do not have access to training, so that they can evaluate their skills and take the first step toward GED certification.

The purpose of this course is not to draw students away from traditional classes.

A second course, currently in development, will provide a much-needed follow up. GED Preparation 2 is a short "brush up" course that will allow students to refresh their academic skills, particularly in the areas of writing skills and mathematics. It is expected to be ready for delivery in March 1999. This course is designed to enable students to meet their individual academic needs and to focus on the topics and skills that require most review.

An additional service available on the Internet from the New Brunswick Community College–Saint John is a Free GED Resources homepage, which contains documents to download and links to other resources on the web. The

continued on page 12

Villlage, from page 3

promised priority consideration for a non-traditional job at George Washington University…I just took the GED examination on the 16th. I ask for your prayers in my effort to pass the test."

"I know someone in our audience tonight who can help you with that," said Wally Amos when Raynice had finished. "Joan Auchter, what are you going to do about this?" All eyes were on me as I stood and pledged to make sure that Raynice's score report got back in time for her to get that job. Thus, we add another stop in Raynice's village.

While she had a 40 or better on each of the tests, Raynice's total score was still short of the required 225. She had to meet it by July to get the job she hoped for. Since the GED office is in Washington, I had the privilege of watching Raynice develop the skills needed to raise her scores. I was inspired by her devotion and enthusiasm. After a brief session, she would return with several resources she and her literacy teacher had reviewed to enhance her skills. Every new skill was a challenge for Raynice—one she cheerfully mastered.

On testing day, Raynice brought her daughter Kiara with her. It was summer, so a GED staff person was trained to serve as a DC Public Schools Alternate Examiner. Before the session, Kiara shared her stories of kindergarten success. When Raynice's scores came back and she heard that she had qualified for her GED diploma, Kiara told her mother, "Mommy, I'm so proud of you. Now we both have diplomas we can put on the wall!"

How far has Raynice traveled? "That trip to the conference was a big hurdle for Raynice, and I don't mean the speaking in front of a crowd. She's not afraid of things like that," Peggy Minnis told me. You

continued on page 8

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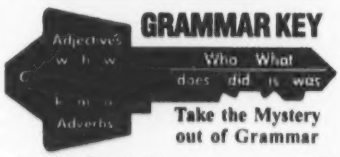

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GED Testing Service Welcomes Two Key Staff Members

The GED Testing Service (GEDTS) welcomes its new Psychometrician, Aster Tessema. Aster comes to GEDTS from the Chauncey Group International (formerly part of the Educational Testing Service, or ETS), in Princeton, New Jersey. As a Senior Associate in Research and Analysis, she was responsible for coordinating statistical analyses for a variety of certification tests, including those for Certified Financial Planner, the National Council of Architectural Registration Board, and the Landscape Architectural Registration Board. Earlier in her career with ETS, she also worked with the three major graduate school entrance examinations (GRE, GMAT, and LSAT).

"Aster brings an extraordinarily solid background to this position," says Lyn Schaefer, GEDTS Director of Test Development. "We're very fortunate to have her on the development team for the 2001-series tests." Aster Tessema holds a master's degree in Educational Statistics and Measurement from Rutgers University.

Kyle S. Malone joined GEDTS on November 23 in the newly created position of Field Service Manager. Before relocating to Washington, DC, a short time ago, Kyle served as Associate Director of Admissions and Coordinator of Multicultural Enrollment at Kalamazoo College in Kalamazoo, Michigan. He also has experience in counseling and preparing young adults for employment and education. In his new capacity, Kyle will develop and oversee GED test security operations, coordinating the activities of the six technical assistance resource specialists, and creating and delivering training tools and activities to the field.

"Kyle's background in education and program development is well-suited to the many demands of his role." says GEDTS Director of Partner Outreach, Fred Edwards. Kyle holds a master's degree in Administration from the University of Notre Dame.

Corrections, Corrections...

Our apologies to Rebecca Lynn Cooper, the 1997 "honor roll" high scorer from Iowa, whose name was inadvertently left out of the honors list in our last issue of *GED Items*. Rebecca earned a 378 in her first go at the tests, and her score was one of the first reported to GEDTS.

Also, our thanks to retired GED Administrator for New Brunswick Peter Kilburn, who spotted an error on page 14 of our September/October issue. Canada requires candidates to earn a 45 on each test, not a 45 average as the graphic indicated. See the corrected graphic below.

How Do Graduating Seniors Perform?

NEW PASSING STANDARD*

40 and 45 (United States); 45 each test (Canada)

Approximately two-thirds (66%) of graduating high school seniors (grade 12 in Canada) are capable of meeting this standard.

*Some jurisdictions, including NJ and WI, have unique requirements for the award of a diploma. See Appendix I of the 1997 *GED Examiner's Manual*.

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Campaign Debunks College Expense Myths, Misperceptions

An education campaign to enhance public knowledge about financing a college education is generating much interest. The "College Is Possible" campaign, sponsored by the Coalition of America's Colleges and Universities, is supported by a dedicated website, the U.S. Department of Education's special toll-free number for college information, and a comprehensive resource guide. In the month following the campaign launch on October 27, more than 34,000 people visited the campaign website (http://www.CollegeIsPossible.org), while the toll-free number (1-800-433-3243) reports it is handling an average of 200 calls per day.

"Callers not only receive a copy of the campaign brochure, they can also request other useful information on student aid and college planning," says Laura Wilcox, the Assistant Director of Public Affairs for the American Council on Education (ACE). In addition, callers to the GED Hotline (1-800-626-9433) also can receive College Is Possible information. The brochure is available in both Spanish and English.

GED Examiners, as well as adult education instructors and counselors can use the materials to "provide adult learners with the opportunity to learn more about funding a college education—either for themselves or their children," notes Stephen Sattler, Director of Marketing and Outreach for ACE's Center for Adult Learning and Educational Credentials.

The campaign builds upon a research survey, released in May, 1997, which revealed that many citizens are likely to miss out on a college education simply because they do not have adequate information about financial aid sources and the range of available options. Persons who are especially at risk of missing out on a college education are members of minority groups, those from families with low incomes, and those whose parents did not attend college.

The survey found that while people value a college education, many dramatically overestimate the price, often by as much as double the actual amount. At the same time, they often underestimate the resources that are available to help pay for college.

Many citizens are likely to miss out on a college education simply because they do not have adequate information about financial aid.

The survey revealed that many people know very little about the wide range of tuition prices and academic environments found in America's 3,600 colleges and universities. For example, survey participants were surprised to learn that seven out of ten full-time students qualify for financial aid—and many receive a substantial amount.

"Colleges have an obligation to help Americans become better, more knowledgeable consumers of higher education," says ACE President Stanley O. Ikenberry. "No deserving student should be deprived of a college degree because he or she doesn't have the right information," he added.

College Is Possible brochures are available from the ACE Fulfillment Service, (301) 604-9073. The cost is $7.50 for each quantity of 400.

Examiner's Manual Update Slated for Release in 1999

The update to the 1997 *GED Examiner's Manual* will be released in early 1999. The update packet, which will be automatically mailed to each Official GED Testing Center, will contain new Section 10 and Appendix G staff training materials, a revised Section 7, and updated policies for the 72 jurisdictions which offer diplomas based on successful test results.

GED Testing Service staff are now in the process of revising portions of Sections 2, 4, and 5. Examiners can expect these revisions to be part of the update when it is released in early 1999. Staff are also making plans to distribute the update to those who ordered manuals through the fulfillment service.

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For GED Examiners

Statistical Report Deadlines Near

How many adults took the GED Tests last year? How many of them passed? What proportion of GED examinees are taking the tests for education or employment reasons?

If your response to these questions was to say "Look the answer up in *Who Took the GED*," then you're on the right track. But are you aware that GED Examiners in many jurisdictions play a direct role in making sure the answers given are accurate?

Reporting data from all 72 states, provinces, and territories that participate in the GED program, *Who Took the GED* (often called the annual statistical report, or ASR for short) presents a clear picture who takes the GED each year. The ASR offers information about passing percentage rates in the various jurisdictions, a year-to-year comparison of test volume and pass rates, and, in 1998, analyzed the effect that the 1997 minimum passing score change had on different jurisdictions.

In jurisdictions where records are kept at the local level, GED Examiners play a critical role in making sure that the ASR is accurate and published on time. How can you help?

- Keep accurate, complete records of testing activities at your center. Refer to Section 4.4-1 of the *GED Examiner's Manual*.
- Report your testing statistics on time. January 15, 1999, is the deadline for GED Chief Examiners to submit their statistical report forms to their GED Administrator in the following jurisdictions: Alabama, Alaska, Delaware, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. Data in other jurisdictions is collected directly by the GED Administrator.
- Submit a statistical report when a center closes. If your GED Testing Center was closed before December 31, 1998, and is located in one of the above jurisdictions, you also must submit a report.

Veteran GED Administrators and Examiners will note that the 1998 form is four pages—twice the length of that used previously. However, many will be pleased to see that GEDTS has reinstated the self-carboning form to facilitate recordkeeping. Also, to accommodate those who complete the form manually, questions concerning "number completed and number passed" have been moved to the front page, and questions about accommodations have been moved to the second page.

As reported in the January/February 1997 issue of *GED Items*, GEDTS now collects race, ethnicity, and gender information. These new data fields are the primary reason for the longer form. If your center or jurisdiction does not collect or is not permitted to release this information, you are not required by GEDTS to provide it. However, be aware that plans are underway to collect this data with the release of the new GED Tests in September 2001.

As always, contact the GED Administrator for your state, province, or territory if you have questions or concerns.

Villlage, from page 4

see, Raynice had never been outside of Washington, DC. For me, it wasn't so difficult to imagine flying to Louisville to make a speech. But what if I had never bought a ticket, never been in an airport, never seen an airplane up close, never stayed in a hotel (much less a suite!) never called home long distance... what would that feel like? For Raynice, "every moment of that trip was a new experience and she handled it like a trooper," recalls Peggy Minnis.

She didn't have to travel alone. On the day of the trip, Irene Ball picked up Raynice, driving into the Washington suburbs to collect Minnis en route to the airport. "For the first time, she could see, smell, taste, touch the American Dream." remembers Minnis. Raynice had shown that she had determination, and now she had an idea for herself how far she'd come and how far she could go. The people who worked with her at the program everyday had become part of her village. And her village is still expanding.

Today, 26-year-old Raynice Brumfield works as a carpenter for George Washington University, making $15.00 per hour, plus benefits. In a few months, she will be eligible to enter an introductory college program. If she stays with the university, her children will be eligible to attend tuition-free. My small role in helping Raynice achieve her goal was just one stop along the main street of our village.

While each program has an important role, it takes several programs, working together, to create the village of support that empowers Raynice and other adults. By looking beyond our program's walls, making connections, and building a strong village, we can better serve others—and we too can be transformed.

Joan Auchter is Executive Director of the GED Testing Service.

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1998 Readers' Survey

We're working to improve *GED Items*. Please help us to give you more of what you want by responding to the following survey. Key results will be reported in a future issue.

Please rate the regular feature sections on their usefulness to you:

	Very Useful			Not Useful
For GED Examiners	4	3	2	1
From the Director	4	3	2	1
GED Graduate Story	4	3	2	1
Legislative Update	4	3	2	1
Marketing & Outreach	4	3	2	1
News and Notes	4	3	2	1
Research Update	4	3	2	1
Teaching Tips	4	3	2	1

How important to you to is news about the following sectors of the GED and Adult Education community?

	Very Important			Not Important
Employers	4	3	2	1
Examiner Training	4	3	2	1
Family Literacy	4	3	2	1
Funding & Grants	4	3	2	1
GED Policies	4	3	2	1
GEDTS Operations	4	3	2	1
Physical Disabilities	4	3	2	1
Public Relations	4	3	2	1
Research	4	3	2	1
Specific Learning Disabilities	4	3	2	1
Teaching	4	3	2	1
Technology	4	3	2	1
Test Development	4	3	2	1
Welfare to Work	4	3	2	1

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:

	Agree Strongly			Disagree Strongly
GED Items should...				
be shorter	4	3	2	1
be longer	4	3	2	1
circulate more frequently	4	3	2	1
circulate less frequently	4	3	2	1

Please rate the following aspects of *GED Items* on the scale provided:

	Excellent			Needs Improvement
Overall appearance	4	3	2	1
Quality of writing	4	3	2	1
Overall content	4	3	2	1
Promptness of delivery	4	3	2	1

Please identify yourself:

❍ GED Examiner ❍ full-time teacher ❍ part-time teacher
❍ GED Administrator ❍ volunteer ❍ policymaker
❍ ABE program administrator ❍ other

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Iowa Honors Wederquist

The Iowa Association for Lifelong Learning has awarded its 1998 Distinguished Service Emeritus Award to the state's Director of Adult Education, Don Wederquist. The award goes annually to a retiring Iowa educator who has demonstrated outstanding leadership, creativity and achievement.

Adult Educator Wins Albert Schweitzer Prize

Long-time family literacy advocate Dr. Sharon K. Darling was awarded the 1998 Albert Schweitzer Prize for Humanitarianism on October 26 from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD.

The annual prize recognizes exemplary achievement by an individual who advances the cause of humanitarianism in the United States. Darling, who directs the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) in Louisville, Kentucky, started her first literacy program nearly 30 years ago in a church basement.

Today, NCFL serves 500,000 parents and children at more than 3,000 sites across the United States. Sharon Darling is the first educator to have been awarded the prize. Previous winners include former President Jimmy Carter, Marian Wright Edelman, the late Norman Cousins, and Dr. C. Everett Koop.

Conference Board Notes Workplace Results

Preliminary survey results released by the U.S. Department of Education's (ED) Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) reveal that employers found the skill improvements they expected for employees participating in workplace education programs. In the survey, employers noticed that participating workers demonstrated improved listening and English communication skills; better ability to understand and apply information, to solve problems, and to work in teams; more positive responses toward change and learning opportunities; and improved ability to use documents, numbers, and manuals.

The research will form the groundwork for a campaign to inform employers about the value of workplace education programs.

About the Cornelius P. Turner Award

Each year, the Cornelius P. Turner Award, named for the founder of the GED testing program, recognizes the accomplishments of one GED graduate who has made an outstanding contribution to society in education, justice, health, or public or social service, and whose achievements either directly benefit the GED program or could not have been attained without a GED diploma.

To be eligible for the Turner Award, the graduate must have earned his or her diploma no fewer than eight years ago. Recent graduates are not eligible for this award. For the nomination to receive consideration, the nominator must provide a written statement about the nominee and obtain the nominee's consent to be considered for the award.

Previous Turner Award recipients include: 1992 National Teacher of the Year Thomas Fleming; Carol M. Swain, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Princeton University; and Seattle, Washington, news reporter Randy Shaw.

To request a 1999 Cornelius P. Turner Award nomination packet, please send your business card or name, address, and daytime telephone number to: Lisa Richards Hone, Special Projects Manager, GED Testing Service, One Dupont Circle NW, Suite 250, Washington, DC 20036-1163.

Disabilities Advocate Glenn Young Moves to ED

Glenn Young, formerly under contract to the National Institute for Literacy, has joined the U.S. Department of Education's Division of Adult Education and Literacy. He was tapped to fill the position of Adults with Disabilities Specialist, previously held by the late Bill Langner. Over the past several years, Young has worked closely with the GED Testing Service staff to improve the accommodations process for adults with Specific Learning Disabilities and Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. Congratulations, Glenn!

NGA offers Welfare and Literacy Guide

The National Governors' Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices announces the availability of a new issue brief, "States Can Use Family Literacy Programs to Support Welfare Reform Goals." For more information, contact Evelyn Ganzglass at NGA, (202) 624-5394.

Lack of Health Literacy Contributes to Rising Costs

The National Academy on an Aging Society says that poor literacy skills cost America billions of dollars when they prevent people from seeking or understanding health care. Depending on who is or is not considered "health literate," the Academy estimates the cost of low literacy skills in health care to be between $30 and $70 billion. The organization used a survey similar to the National Adult Literacy Survey to estimate "health literacy" and then used the results in conjunction with national health care expenditure data to make the estimates. For more information, send e-mail to info@agingsociety.org.

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Online GED Guidance, from page 4
purpose of the site is to provide GED students and instructors with practical resources that they can use in preparing for the GED Tests. Still in its infancy, the site is slowly growing. Visitors to the site are encouraged to send in any resources or links that they have found useful to help the site grow.

For more information on GED Preparation 1 or to see our Free GED Resources homepage, visit us on the Internet at http://cite.telecampus.com. To go to "GED Prep 1," click on the link labeled "distance courses."

Chris Smith is an instructor at New Brunswick Community College's Saint John campus. Specific questions about the GED preparation services provided through the college may be directed to him via e-mail at: SmithC@nbccsj.gov.nb.ca.

GED Admins: Welcome & Welcome Back!

by Cathy Allin

Among the many new names and faces who have joined the program in 1998, a few are familiar to veteran GED staff members. The GED Testing Service welcomes back to the program Phyllis Rich in Nevada, (702) 687-9104; Murray Meszaros in Utah, (801) 578-8356; Art Kaneshiro, Hawaii, (808) 586-3129; and Gerry Young in Alberta, (403) 427-0010. Since we published last year the names of new GED Administrators for the 72 state, provinces, and territories that offer the GED, many jurisdictions have new leadership. Attending their first GED Administrators' Conference in July were: Karen Liersch, Arizona, (602) 542-5802; Kay McVey, Arkansas, (501) 682-1978; Kimberly Lee, Georgia, (404) 679-1621; Lolita Reyes, Guam, (671) 735-4422; Andrew McMahan, Maine (207) 287-5890; Preston Smeltzer, Wisconsin, (608) 261-6335; Luis Ruiz, Puerto Rico, (787) 758-6898; Blair Littler, British Columbia, (250) 356-8133; Maurice Roy, New Brunswick–French, (506) 453-8237; Byron Cutcliffe, Prince Edward Island, (902) 368-4690; Steve Beckman, DANTES, (850) 452-1089; and Mary Reynolds, International, (410) 843-8677.

Welcome also to Loretta Costin in Florida, (850) 488-7153 and Joan Polster in California, (916) 327-0037; Susan Carnell, Michigan, (517) 373-1692; James E. Burns, Montana, (406) 444-4438; Ralph A. "Tony" McManus, Ohio, (614) 466-4868; and Paul Raymond, Ontario, (416) 325-4283.

Cathy Allin is the Operations Coordinator for the GED Testing Service.

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